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# THE TRAGEDY OF CENTRAL EUROPE

*By the Same Author*

PORT ARTHUR, THE SIEGE AND  
CAPITULATION.

THE PASSING OF THE  
SHEREEFIAN EMPIRE

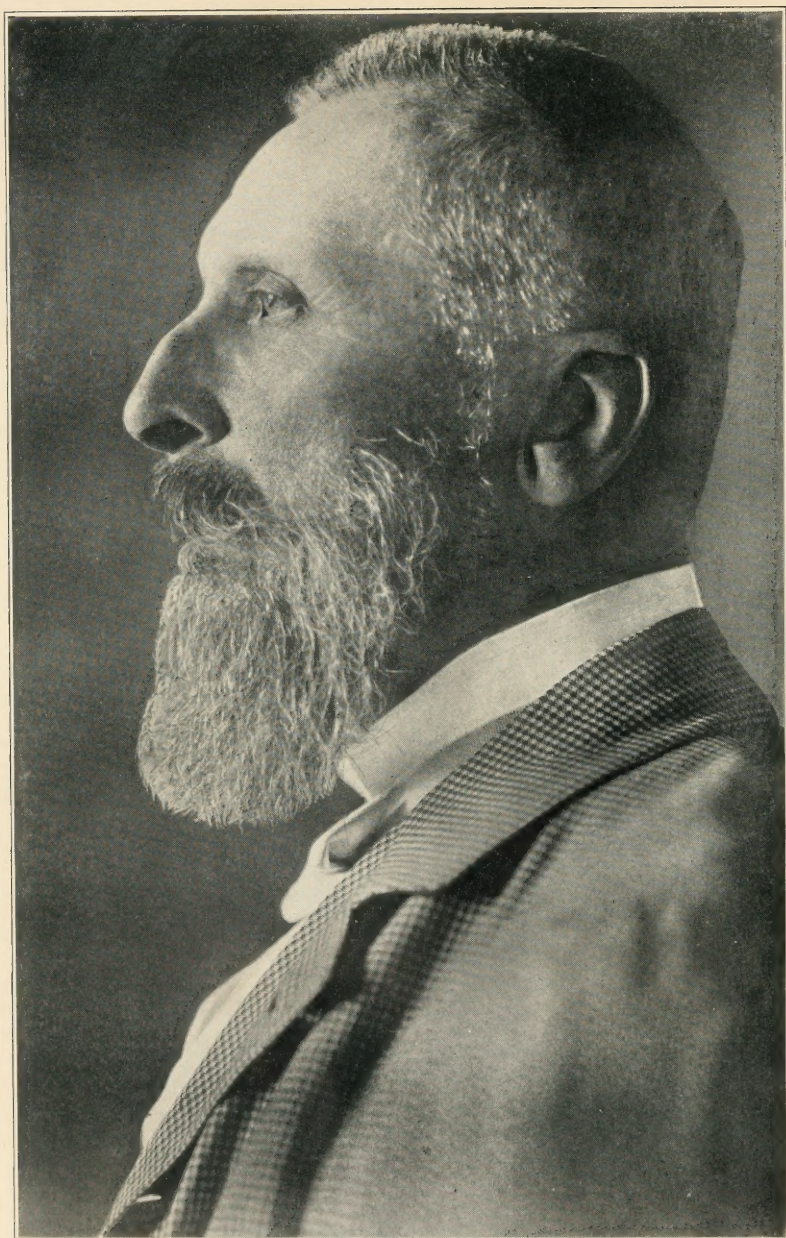
WITH THE TURKS IN THRACE

DESPATCHES FROM THE  
DARDANELLES

EXPERIENCES IN THE GREAT  
WAR







COUNT ALBERT APPONYI

*Camera Portrait  
by E. O. Hoppé*



# THE TRAGEDY OF CENTRAL EUROPE

BY

ELLIS ASHMEAD-BARTLETT, C.B.E.

AUTHOR OF

"PORT ARTHUR, THE SIEGE AND CAPITULATION"; "THE PASSING OF  
THE SHEREEFIAN EMPIRE"; "WITH THE TURKS IN THRACE";  
"DESPATCHES FROM THE DARDANELLES"; "EXPERIENCES IN THE GREAT  
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## PREFACE

IT has been my endeavour in this book to describe some of the strange events in Central Europe of which I was an eye-witness during the year of 1919, when the future of millions of men of many races and of many creeds was being decided at the Conference of Paris.

The year 1919 witnessed the collapse and disintegration of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, an event of such far-reaching results that no one can foretell what future lies in store for the small dominions and republics which have arisen from amidst the ruins of the old Dual Empire.

The year 1919 saw the desperate struggles between the Royalists and the Bolshevists in Russia, and was rendered memorable by the amazing attempt of Lenin to convert the ancient feudal kingdom of Hungary to the doctrines of Moscow.

This strange adventure, by which a small gang of Lenin's agents captured the entire machinery of government in Hungary and exercised despotic sway for a period of five months, was intended as the preliminary step towards a vast campaign to convert all the states of Central Europe to Bolshevism.

The attempt failed, and Bolshevism collapsed because of the economic ruin it brought on Hungary, and owing to



the commonsense of the Hungarian peasants, who were quick to discover that they had nothing to gain and everything to lose by deserting their former political leaders and ranging themselves under the red flag of Lenin and Bela Kuhn. I have attempted to describe—from personal observation and intimate association with the Soviet leaders—what life is like under a Bolshevik régime, and how all classes would fare should the same experiment be tried in this country at some future date.

On the downfall of Bela Kuhn there followed the Rumanian occupation of Hungary, which inflicted enormous economic damage. Finally, this unhappy country was ruthlessly partitioned by the Treaty of the Trianon, so that at the present time only one-third of her former territory remains under the rule of the Magyars.

The year 1921 was a memorable one in Hungarian history because of the two abortive attempts of the late Emperor Karl to regain his throne. This unhappy young monarch, beloved by all who knew him, ended his short but chequered career in exile and death on the island of Madeira. The account of his two attempts to re-establish his dynasty, and of his melancholy end, has been written for this book by a young Hungarian, Aldemár Boroviceny, who was the Emperor's intimate friend for many years and accompanied him on his last fateful journey by aeroplane from Switzerland to Hungary. Boroviceny is an ardent loyalist and supporter of the old régime, and the reader should remember that throughout this account of the late Emperor's peregrina-

## PREFACE

II

tions he is listening to the words and views of Boroviceny, and not to mine.

In the final chapters I have attempted to describe the appalling economic and political chaos into which Central Europe has been thrown by the Balkanizing of the former territories of the Dual Empire.

E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT.

London,

April 17th, 1923.





# THE TRAGEDY OF CENTRAL EUROPE

## CHAPTER I

### A FALLEN EMPIRE

GIBBON took twenty years to write his immortal "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," and the period covered by him extended over some fourteen centuries. Who ever thought this gigantic tragedy would occur again under modern conditions of interlocked finance, economics and world politics? Who foresaw that in the Twentieth Century we should witness the fall and disruption of a powerful Empire of over forty-five millions of people, which did not take centuries to accomplish its final tragedy, but merely the short span of five years? The crash of Empires in Europe has been so colossal and so sudden, that few are able to visualize the immensity of the catastrophe, and still fewer to foretell, with any hope of accuracy, the future that awaits the numerous states which have arisen from amidst the ruins of the old Hapsburg and Russian Monarchies, all of which are now in the throes of financial, economic and political chaos. It will be my endeavour to point out in the following pages the general trend of these disintegrated elements towards fresh racial, political and economic groupings, and give the reader a first-hand picture of the colossal upheaval produced in Eastern Europe by the world war.

In January, 1919, Lord Burnham invited me to go to Central Europe to write a series of articles for the "Daily Telegraph," and I was thus enabled to visit enemy countries within two months of the signing of the Armistice.

I left Paris in February to pass through Switzerland, the only route to Austria being viâ the Tyrol. The luxurious pre-war expresses from Ostend and Paris conveying the traveller to Vienna in twenty-four hours no longer existed, and in 1919 hardly a first-class carriage remained east of the Rhine with unbroken windows or without a door ruthlessly torn from its hinges. The steel bones of the "Wagons-lits" littered Europe from the Marne to the Niemen; there was not a time-table which did not lie, and not a railroad official who could say accurately when a train would start or when and where it would end its journey.

On February 23 I arrived at Buchs on the Swiss-Austrian Frontier. Here one left civilization behind, and entered the devastated zone. The contrast was glaring. It was just as if the Gods had cut Europe in two with a sharp knife. The Swiss and Austrian stations at Buchs adjoin. On the Swiss side one found officials in spotless uniforms; cleanliness, food, warmth and comfort; the restaurants over-flowing with cakes, sandwiches, sausages, beer, wine and spirits, and the slot-machines filled to the brim with chocolates, cigarettes and sweets. One remarked also the normal proportion of men and women accompanied by healthy, well-fed children. But once one passed the wooden barrier and stepped on to Austrian soil, what a change met the eye! Hardly a normal man, woman or child was to be seen, and no food, wine, warmth or comfort were to be found. The crowd which greeted the traveller was composed of officials in rags, once the brilliant uniforms of Franz Joseph's Empire; maimed soldiers and many half-starved, half-clad children, standing with bare feet in the snow, shivering with cold, their veins seemingly without blood, these children being allowed on the platform to beg from strangers. The restaurant was stripped bare of everything but the old and now ironical advertisements on the walls, the empty tables, a number of unbroken chairs, and a few unemployed plates and glasses. One could not buy a loaf of bread, a sandwich, or a glass of wine to keep one warm for love or

money. Yet this cheerless shelter was packed with men, women and children, collected together, some out of curiosity to watch trains arrive from the outer world from which they had been separated so long, the majority to escape for a few hours from the biting, cruel winds of the Tyrol by herding together for mutual protection and warmth. Each individual in this crowd seemed crushed beneath an immense weight of misery and despair. Their minds and their spirits had been dulled by long years of starvation, misery and acute mental suffering, so that only the primitive material instincts, the longing for food and warmth, remained. Amongst these lost souls no trace could be found of the bitterness of defeat. Pride of race and Empire, if they ever really existed in Austria, had yielded to the pressure of intolerable burdens, such as no highly civilized community had ever endured before.

In 1919 every Austrian was anxious to do his best to help his former enemy. All he asked in return was not money, but merely the traditional crumb from the rich man's table. A biscuit, a bit of stale bread, a stick of chocolate, a tin of preserved meat, a half-smoked cigar or cigarette were priceless treasures along the steel rails of this Viâ Dolores from Buchs to Vienna. A tin of condensed milk aroused more emotion than any other gift. Many a mother, who had watched her children slowly wasting away from malnutrition, was moved to tears by the gift of a can of this precious liquid.

How anomalous and unjust are the laws which govern the economic life of nations! By merely stepping back across the frontier into Switzerland, one could obtain a surfeit of all the necessities of life lacking on the eastern side of this fatal barrier. But few Austrians, even at this time, when their Exchange was still fairly high, could afford to buy anything in Switzerland. Two different bits of coloured paper of the same intrinsic value, the one backed by a solvent Republic, the other by a bankrupt Empire, spelt the difference between luxury and starvation.



On crossing into Austrian territory I enquired about the trains to Vienna. There was only one a day, scheduled to take thirty-six hours, but without any guarantee of arrival under forty-eight, composed of third-class carriages, many of which were without doors, and all without windows. The traveller was warned to provide his own food, as there was nothing to be had "en route." Now a journey under these conditions through the Tyrol in mid-winter is not to be undertaken lightly; but, as there was no alternative, I made my arrangements by laying in a large stock of provisions, and then tried to keep warm until the time came to start. But I was fortunately saved from this painful predicament by the sudden arrival of a train composed of Wagon-Lits conveying a large British Military and Commercial Mission to Warsaw, *viâ* Vienna.

The head of the Mission at once consented to find room for me. This was, I believe, the first train of its kind which had been seen in Austria since the Armistice, and its arrival created a sensation amongst the starving people of the towns and villages through which we passed. The well-lit, clean and comfortable carriages, the tables laden with viands, the warmth of the interior, shown by the steam issuing from the snow covered pipes, seemed to the Austrians the harbinger of better days to come. Their mentality, dulled by years of suffering and misfortune, refused to believe that their conquerors wished to inflict further humiliations and sufferings on them. Therefore they regarded all these Missions as the pioneers of immense schemes of relief, which would be poured into their country by generous enemies, only too anxious to forget the past, and to help all Europe to return to normal conditions. Alas for their hopes! How little did they foresee the lean years of ever-increasing suffering, humiliation and misery ahead of them! Who can say how many more have yet to be endured! From the first hour I set foot in Austria, I found every social grade of Austrian, from the working-man to the old nobility, suffering from

this pet illusion—one which has made their fate so inexpres-  
sibly hard to bear—namely, that they would never be held  
responsible for the war by their conquerors. Whether  
thinking as individuals, or collectively as a nation, they  
regarded themselves as the innocent victims of a malignant  
fate which chained them to the Juggernaut of German  
Imperialism and Militarism, which drove roughshod over  
democracy in Europe until the breaking-point came,  
followed by the colossal crash of Franz Joseph's Empire.  
The mass of the Austrian people, driven from one field of  
mismanaged slaughter to another throughout five mortal  
years, their women and children meanwhile starving at  
home, could not believe that even their most bitter enemies  
would hold them responsible for the outbreak of a war in  
which they themselves had been the worst sufferers in the  
holocaust of slaughter and misery. They expected, there-  
fore, to be treated in a friendly manner on the cessation  
of hostilities and to be invited back into the comity of  
civilized peoples—having voluntarily got rid of their guilty  
leaders—and, like the prodigal son, to be greeted with  
countless fatted calves sent gratuitously from England, the  
United States, and the Argentine to revive their half-starved  
bodies. They failed to make allowance for the burning  
passions aroused in the hearts of the victors by five years  
of merciless warfare, and thus never expected that at the  
Conference of Paris, economical facts would be ruthlessly  
cast aside and the respective degrees of responsibility for  
Europe's sorrows ignored.

Both the Austrians and Hungarians apparently felt little  
or no enmity towards any of the Entente Powers after the  
signing of the Armistice. The mass of the people were  
prepared to welcome them as liberators and to forget the  
past. But this feeling has slowly faded away since it has  
begun to dawn on the vanquished that they will have to  
drink the cup of humiliation and defeat to its uttermost  
dregs.

It would appear as a logical deduction from these facts

that once individual suffering has passed beyond a certain point, that is to say, when the soldier has endured every imaginable hardship in the field—the legitimate perquisites of his profession—and, in addition, the acuter mental suffering of knowing that while he is freezing and starving in the trenches, his family is slowly dying from hunger and cold at home, his patriotism quickly becomes eliminated. The individual ceases to take any further interest in his country, its former glories, or what its boundaries shall be in the future. Only the primitive instinct of self-preservation remains, and if he cannot find salvation for himself and his dependents under the government of the country which gave him birth, he will turn without any bitterness of feeling to the conquerors of his country, if only they will provide the food, warmth and clothes necessary to keep death and starvation from his home. Only the victors in a World War can afford the luxury of hate. How much better it would have been for Europe if this cardinal fact had been recognised in Paris in 1919!

One question which opens up a vast field of argument to the legal mind is this:—Can the individual citizen of an absolute monarchy be held responsible for the policy of that monarchy in the same manner as the individual citizen of a Constitutional Government, who, by his vote, has placed the Executive in power? It may even be asked if the individual citizen of a Constitutional Government can actually be held responsible for the acts of his Executive, if at the time when he cast his vote, the crisis which leads his country into a long and bloody war has not arisen? I ask these questions because nothing has astonished the primitive political minds of the mass of the people of the old Hapsburg Empire so much as the attitude of their enemies in holding them responsible for the events leading up to 1914 and the outbreak of war. They felt confident that once they had broken the shackles of absolute monarchy, as represented in the person of Franz Joseph



and his advisers, they would be received by the Democracies of the world with wide-open arms. They argued in this sense. "You have won your war and we have won ours. You have conquered our masters and we are grateful to you, because, in winning your victory, you have incidentally helped us to win ours. Now let us all be friends once again and work together in order to reconstitute European Society on a basis whereby the democracies of the world can never be forced by their rulers into hostilities with one another again."

But suffering and starving are, however, apt to make man see ahead of his times. Doubtless the world will eventually arrive at this desirable millenium, but it was not in the minds of those who framed the Treaties of Versailles and the Trianon.

The Ministers of the Church of England, and of other denominations, are frequently engaged in heated controversy as to how to interpret to their respective flocks the exact meaning of the divine words: "I . . . visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me, and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love Me and keep My commandments." Now the Supreme Council in Paris adopted very much the same formula. The Big Four, following the Divine precedent—we will hope misunderstanding it—said: "We will visit the sins of the rulers upon the peoples down to the third and fourth generations of those who fought against us, and we will show mercy unto thousands of those who deserted their own countries and joined us during the course of the war." On this false and rotten foundation, the attempt has been made to reconstruct Central Europe.

The journey from Buchs to Vienna enabled one to visualize the desperate state to which the Central Powers were reduced in the latter years of the war. The Tyrol is in normal times a desolate country, but in 1919, in the grip of Winter and starvation, it appeared to be a gigantic ice-

berg dotted with human habitations without heat or life. It seemed as if some pestilence had swept over the country, leaving only bare buildings and aged caretakers. In the countryside there was a complete absence of all live stock. Not a horse, a cow, a pig, a chicken, or even one of the famous white geese was to be seen; all had long since been swept into the vortex of red war and devoured. The half-starved children and old men, who hung about the stations, pressed their noses to the windows and begged, not for alms, which were of no use to them, but for bread or biscuits or anything in fact which in normal times would have been thrown into the refuse heap.

How well I remember our arrival at Vienna on that bitterly cold winter's night, with the ground covered with snow! The station was in semi-darkness, but the station master, with old time courtliness, came to meet the special train with the Mission on board, and, on seeing our astonishment, attempted to apologize for the miserable decline from its pre-war splendour. We found the rails rusting away from want of use, and green grass growing between the lines; for the train services had almost ceased. A few of the old, pre-war porters, enfeebled from lack of food, their ragged uniforms hanging in strips around them, did their best to help us with the baggage. Then we passed out into the cold, winter night to the cabs, for motor-cars were no longer running. Who will ever forget the cabs of Vienna during 1919! For long months the wretched horses had been starved owing to shortage of food-stuff, their legitimate fodder having been appropriated by the hungry populace, and now, under the dim light from the station lamps, their dark, fleshless ribs showed up against the white snow like the gaunt skeletons of pre-historic creatures in museums. One could count every rib on these wretched animals and it seemed impossible they could ever be forced into a walk, much less a trot. Owing to the persistent shortage of food, the owners of the two-horse cabs had been obliged to dispense with one of their

animals, so the miserable appearance of these outfits was made the worse by having one gaunt skeleton attached to the single centre pole in the place of two. In these vehicles we slowly made our way to the Hotel Bristol.

The manager had been informed by cable of the coming of the Mission and had done everything in his power to conceal the poverty of the land, and to make us comfortable on our arrival. But what comfort! No heating of any sort, no warm water in which to wash, no sheets, only threadbare blankets and not a biscuit or a cup of tea. Only mineral waters and thin wine remained. The first person I met was Primus, the good friend of all travellers, who had got me out of Vienna by the last train in July, 1914, and but for whose assistance I should probably have languished a prisoner in Austria for years. Many of the old waiters I had previously known, still clad in their old evening suits, sadly worn by time and covered with dirt and grease, came forward to greet me. "What a change! What a revolution! and what a heart must one have, to contemplate without emotion such a rise and such a fall!" Ruin, ruin everywhere. Is there anything quite so tragic as the passing of an Empire! For fallen empires can never be revived. Individual death is bad enough, but then the body is soon laid below, placed out of sight and speedily forgotten. But the corpses of these old empires are only buried by the passing of countless centuries. They remain day after day, week after week, month after month, year after year, century after century, slowly rotting, but ever bringing back the sad memories of the past.

I shall only attempt to describe briefly the scenes of misery in Vienna in these early days of 1919. The whole population was absolutely on the verge of starvation and only the allied Food Missions, working heroically amidst great difficulties, kept the population from dying by thousands. I do not know if any statistics have ever been

prepared showing the number of deaths due to cold and malnutrition in Austria, but the figure must be very high, especially amongst the children. Hundreds of thousands of others will grow to manhood weak in body and mind through lack of nourishment. In these days such food as could be obtained in the hotels and restaurants was impossible. The "petit déjeuner" consisted of a kind of "ersatz" coffee made of baked barley—a filthy mixture drunk by the Viennese for years—without milk or sugar, and accompanied by a small square of dark-brown bread composed of anything the Food Controller could find to mix with the flour in order to make the daily ration go round. The allowance per head was about a quarter of a pound per day. The mass of the people never saw meat, which was almost unobtainable, and lived on their bread allowance, eked out by occasional doles of potatoes or turnips or any vegetables which happened to reach the city. How they managed to live at all is a mystery I have never been able to understand. The Holy Brahmin with his single grain of pure barley enjoyed comparative luxury in comparison. How little will support human life, and how desperately nature struggles to survive, even under the most miserable conditions! The mass of the population had sunk to a state lower than that of the animal world. They were too ill-fed to work, even if work had been available. Of fuel they had none, and thus whole families remained huddled together during the day to obtain some mutual warmth, and never ventured out except to line up in the "queues" to obtain the bread or potato ration, or whatever might be the issue on a particular day.

The mass of the children of Vienna were only kept alive by the establishment of soup kitchens in various parts of the city. Outside these kitchens the unhappy youngsters assembled in long queues to receive a steaming bowl of soup, a certain allowance per head being made for each child in the family. The pride of victory was quickly forgotten when the stranger watched these wretched, half-



starved children shivering with cold, waiting their turn, and saw the pathetic struggle between conscience and the temptations produced by sheer starvation. Some would carry their bowl home without even attempting to touch it, but for others hunger and temptation would prove too strong, and they would flop themselves down in the street and consume not only their own portion, but that intended for other members of the family, and then seek another place in the queue.

The food question in Austria was at its worst throughout the winter and spring of 1919. The Commissions had to search the world to obtain enough cereals to supply the population, and security had to be taken for their payment in the form of liens on state buildings, forests, railroads, objets d'art, etc. The general want affected every social strata of the population. But the worse sufferers were the middle classes and the minor officials dependent on fixed salaries. During a national crisis there is always someone to look after the working-classes who, by their very numbers, inspire a wholesome fear in the governing class, or in the minds of Foreign Missions, who feel their own working classes may catch some contagious affection such as Socialism or Bolshevism, either in the Russian or Hungarian form. But the great, patient middle class who suffer in silence through fear of doing anything derogatory to the dignity of their position, have less influence, and in consequence, fewer champions. They are caught between the upper and the nether stones of the social mill and are ground almost to pulp without a word of complaint in this age of increased taxation and high cost of living in the perpetual struggle for political supremacy between Capital and Labour.

The most fortunate in Austria were the owners of estates in the country, who could live on the land, and support themselves and those immediately dependent on them, largely on their game preserves. But even the upper classes were entirely without many articles which were

formerly considered necessities of life, such as tea, coffee—quite unknown for years—sugar, salt, pepper, etc. Foreigners living in Vienna during this period could usually obtain something, but one never knew exactly what it would be or when it would arrive. The peasants flocked into Vienna by the early morning trains, each with something from his plot of land or farm. One man would have a fat or a thin goose, another would bring in the remains of his old cow, another a very rare luxury such as a pat of butter, but milk one never saw. Now when the food position became acute, food prices were fixed for every article, to avoid the scandal of the rich being able to purchase food at prices quite prohibitive to the poor. But this ordinance was soon disregarded, and every day food was smuggled into the city and sold at rates vastly higher than the scale allowed by the Food Controller. These dealers were known as "*Sleighthändler*" and no class was ever more abused and, at the same time, more sought after. Yet I do not know how foreigners would have got through these early months had not an unexpected source of supply turned up. Almost everyone living in Vienna during these lean months became ill from stomach trouble, owing to the scarcity of food and its bad quality. The bread was especially unwholesome. It defied analysis, cut the stomach like a knife, and killed off thousands of young children and elderly people, by causing dysentery and kindred complaints. But fortunately our Food Mission in Vienna suddenly obtained possession of a very unexpected supply, on which we foreigners and some of our friends were able to subsist for a number of months. The Austrian Authorities announced that they had in their warehouses fifteen thousand food parcels belonging to British prisoners of war, which had never been forwarded further east than Vienna. They had originally been intended for our prisoners in Turkey, but owing to the break-down of communications when Bulgaria collapsed, they could not be forwarded. This food supply was there-

fore handed over to our Mission, which in turn sold the parcels to Europeans in need of them at the very modest price of ten shillings each.

An inevitable decline in the morals of the people followed in the wake of so much misery, poverty and want. As it became increasingly difficult to support life or to obtain a bare means of existence, the morals of all classes sank lower and lower, until even the most virtuous seemed likely to succumb to temptation. Many women reached that stage of misery where they were prepared to sell themselves to the highest bidder, not for the sake of making money, but merely to obtain a dress which formerly they would have disdained to wear, or for some article of food which in pre-war days would have been found in every cupboard. The streets, the theatres, the cafés and the hotel corridors swarmed with women, looking for friends who would help them to keep the wolf from the door or their clothes on their backs.

The upper classes in general held themselves aloof from the prevailing corruption in morals and suffered in dignified silence, but innumerable young girls from the middle classes succumbed to temptation and supported themselves and their homes in a manner which would have astounded their parents, relatives and friends had they but known the truth, or dared to investigate the facts.

Few cities have ever fallen so low as starved, ruined and frozen Vienna in the years following the war. The plight of the professional classes, officers, doctors, lawyers, and government officials dependent on their salaries or on small earned incomes, became absolutely desperate and it was quite impossible for them to keep their homes together. Thus families were broken up and the members—often before reaching maturity—were obliged to shift for themselves; the girls drifting into immorality, and the men into occupations they would have formerly considered beneath their dignity. Many ex-officers could be found sweeping the streets in order to obtain the government dole for such

manual labour, or else blacking boots at the street corners in their decaying uniforms, with a notice pinned on stating how they had formerly served their country in the field. Some of the more fortunate officers were recruited into the ranks of the police and now pass their days regulating the traffic; some obtained employment as clerks in banks and commercial houses; others have become shopwalkers or serve behind the counter, and many till the fields as agricultural labourers. In this universal struggle for existence but few could afford to consider their former pride and dignity and each sought a means of earning enough bread and meat to keep body and soul together.

In the prevailing almost universal misery the wretched fate of the former Commander-in-Chief of the Austro-Hungarian Armies, the famous Conrad von Hoetzendorf, deserves to be recorded, for it is a typical example of the strange turns of fortune which have overwhelmed so many of the great and powerful in this fallen Empire. In 1914, Conrad von Hoetzendorf was the foremost soldier in Europe, in supreme command of some four millions of men. The signing of the Armistice, the fall of the Monarchy and the outbreak of the Revolution left him dependent on his pension of about twenty-five thousand crowns per annum or one thousand pounds in pre-war money. The present value of this sum—if it can be said to have any value—is about one shilling and a penny. Does history offer a more pitiful spectacle than the former leader of an army of four millions reduced to such straits? Faced with starvation, the ex-Commander-in-Chief has obtained a license to keep a tobacco shop in the Tyrol, and now retails cheap cigarettes and small packets of coarse tobacco to the men who served in the army, which he so often led to disaster and defeat. Reduced to extreme misery, in the winter of 1919, he despatched his A.D.C. to Vienna to sell the last thing he possessed of any value, namely, his fur-lined military coat, for the sum of sixty thousand crowns. *Sic transit gloria mundi!*



All traces of the long line of Hapsburg Monarchs, who ruled the former Empire for seven centuries, have disappeared from Vienna, except for a few monuments and the gaunt, crumbling walls of the palaces and houses in which they lived. The visitor can still gaze on the oaken coffins containing their rotting and neglected bones if he cares to descend to the vaults of the churches and cathedrals. But who cares? and who ever visits them now!

Their good deeds and their bad, their glories and their victories, their humiliations and their defeats, have been or will be recorded by the faithful historian, but to-day the Hapsburgs are completely forgotten by Vienna and the Viennese. Maria Theresa, Francis II., and Franz Joseph, their statesmen, their generals, and their courtiers have sunk into the deepest oblivion. The great stage on which they played their big or little rôles has been pulled to pieces and the magnificent uniforms and court dresses in which they strutted for so many years before complacent millions, together with the resplendent liveries of their lackeys, have been seen for the last time adorning the backs of the actors in the musical comedies of the capital. No monarchy was ever so little regretted or so quickly forgotten, except by a few surviving Court Officials, who recall in their long hours of semi-starvation and penury the glorious memories of the past and all the little things which mattered then—imperial smiles, imperial snubbings, imperial pomp, imperial failings and—most poignant of all—that delicious odour of the imperial banquets.

Now Franz Joseph has passed to his last account “unloved, unhonoured and unsung” and is only remembered by a few typical stories which have stuck to his memory in place of the noble deeds which cast a halo over the memory of great kings and rulers of men. Of these I will relate a few which are typical of the man.

Shortly after the old Emperor's death, his two faithful valets, who had been with him for forty years, both committed suicide being unable to withstand the departure from

their normal habits of life. Franz Joseph had a mode of living very uncommon to the mass of mankind and his Palace was never exactly a bed of roses. He retired to rest regularly every night at eight p.m. and was accustomed to rise at two a.m. At three a.m. he would leave his Palace and walk round to take his early coffee and have a chat with his mistress, Frau Schratt, and at about five a.m. would start the day's work. The old man was indeed industrious, and conscientiously devoted fourteen hours out of every twenty-four to misruling his subjects. Now the two old valets became so used to this procedure of rousing their master at two a.m. and getting him dressed by three a.m. that they could never accustom themselves to a new time table. As they could find no other master with a taste for going to bed at eight p.m. and rising again at two a.m.—although many offered to allow themselves to be put to bed at the latter hour—they preferred to follow him to the grave where it is whispered their spirits now hover round him in the early hours of the morning.

On another occasion, in 1916, when things were going very badly on the Russian front, the Emperor roused himself from the lethargy into which he was gradually sinking and declared to the dismay of his attendants and of the General Staff that he would personally visit the front to encourage the troops by his presence.

His entourage begged him in vain to abandon the journey, which they felt might prove fatal to a man of his age, but Franz Joseph was obdurate. Finally, the Chief of the General Staff, Conrad von Hoetzendorf, was delegated to remonstrate with him, and did so in the following words which will surely become historic :

“ Your Majesty must consider that you are not as young and as strong as you were. The journey will be very long and trying and your Majesty's presence is most urgently required in Vienna. Besides which, if your Majesty will only consent to wait for two or three weeks, I will guarantee the armies will be much nearer Vienna and therefore much more accessible.”

Shortly before his death further bad news was carried to the Emperor. It was reported that the Russians had crossed the Hungarian frontier and were threatening Budapest. The old Emperor sprang from his chair on hearing the news. "Give me my rifle," he shouted, "I will have a shot at him. Has he a really fine head?" He thought he was once more "a-chasing of the deer."

This recalls another story, very typical of his character, which was entirely dominated by the desire to preserve his Imperial dignity and the strictest etiquette at any cost. When hunting stags in the Carpathians he was accompanied for forty consecutive years by his old and favourite huntsman called Pettera. Every morning at 2.30 a.m., in rain or snow or frost, these two inseparables set out in a two-horse carriage from the hunting lodge to the foot of the hills. For thirty-nine consecutive years, when his Imperial Master had seated himself in the carriage, his companion proceeded slowly and with much ostentation to climb the box and seat himself alongside of the coachman. On seeing this manœuvre nearly completed, the Emperor would exclaim, "My dear Pettera, it is a very cold morning. You must not sit up there, come inside with me and keep yourself warm." Thus swathed in rugs the two old cronies set out to the foothills.

On the fortieth year they set out as usual. Old Pettera was now very old, it was a bitterly cold morning and he was shivering all over. Thus, from old age, misery, or forgetfulness, he made no effort to mount the box, but proceeded to seat himself alongside of his old master and friend. Franz Joseph almost exploded with anger. "What the devil do you mean by seating yourself inside with me," he exclaimed, "your place is on the box alongside of the coachman. I never heard of such a gross breach of etiquette." Like a kicked dog, poor old Pettera crept from beneath the warmth of the rugs, climbed up on the box and froze almost to death for his breach of the etiquette which had been observed for nigh on forty years.

Such was the last of the Hapsburgs who ruled over the dual Monarchy for over 600 years. All that remains to-day to remind future generations of their glories and their triumphs, of their humiliations and disasters, are their monuments scattered about the city, the vaults in which they lie at rest, the small Schonbrünn Palace in the suburbs of Vienna, and the gigantic Hofburg Palace in the centre of the city. Everything else has been taken away by the conquerors or by their former subjects.

Schonbrünn, the favourite residence of Franz Joseph, has been turned into a summer park for the use of the Viennese. The good Republicans and their families can be found there in thousands on Sunday afternoons, eating their sandwiches and drinking their bottled beer on the beautiful lawns, or strolling in full enjoyment of their new-found freedom beneath the shade of its leafy avenues, forgetting for a few short hours the sad fact that the krone has fallen to four hundred thousand to the pound sterling. Doubtless, there are many who recalling the splendours of the past would prefer to remain outside the iron gates as of yore with a more substantial coin in their pockets.

The interior of the palace has been turned into a home for waifs and strays and hundreds of young heads can be seen gazing from the windows on to the enchanted garden below, totally unconscious of the strange turn of the wheel of fortune which has suddenly transferred them from the slums to the palace of an Emperor. The visitor, for a small consideration, is shown the private apartments of the Emperor which have been kept intact—the little room where he slept, the door through which the two dead valets passed every morning at 2 a.m. to arouse him from his slumbers, and the narrow stairway down which he crept whilst his subjects still slumbered, to pay his morning visit to Frau Schratt. The sight of Schonbrünn is sad, but instructive. How different it might have been had Franz Joseph but foreseen the future and given his country a Constitutional Government in time.



The gigantic Hofburg presents an even more desolate appearance. Not a chair or a bureau, a mirror, candelabra, or family portrait remains. The rooms occupied by so many royal kings and beautiful queens have been stripped absolutely bare, the very carpets have been taken from the floors and sold at public auction to provide food for the subjects they ruled for so long and with so little foresight and prescience.

Not a bottle of wine remains in the imperial cellars once the pride of the Monarch and beloved of his brother Kings. Where are the huge hogsheads of priceless Rhine and Moselle wine accumulated with meticulous care and sufficient to keep future generations of Hapsburgs in liquor for so many years? Only the great casks remain, exuding a faint odour of the grape, and the wine itself is delighting the palates of the citizens of Vienna, who would never have had the chance of drinking to the memory of the Hapsburgs, had they not fallen so low. All that remain of the Hofburg's former glories are a few battle pictures which no one wants. The Palace still stands, and doubtless will for many a year, a grim memorial of the imperial past and probably the last warning Europe will ever need that the days of autocratic monarchies have passed for ever.

Now one can hire the rooms for private dances or entertain friends at cinema shows within these historic precincts. In the dark hours of the night the walls no longer whisper back the obsequious flattery and measured commonplaces of the cringing courtier, but re-echo to the merry, unrestrained laughter of democratic supper parties. The honest bourgeois, the Jew and the stranger " shimmy " where the Hapsburgs trod; the courtesan daintily trips her way in the haughty footsteps of Maria Theresa.

## CHAPTER II

### VIENNA AND THE VIENNESE

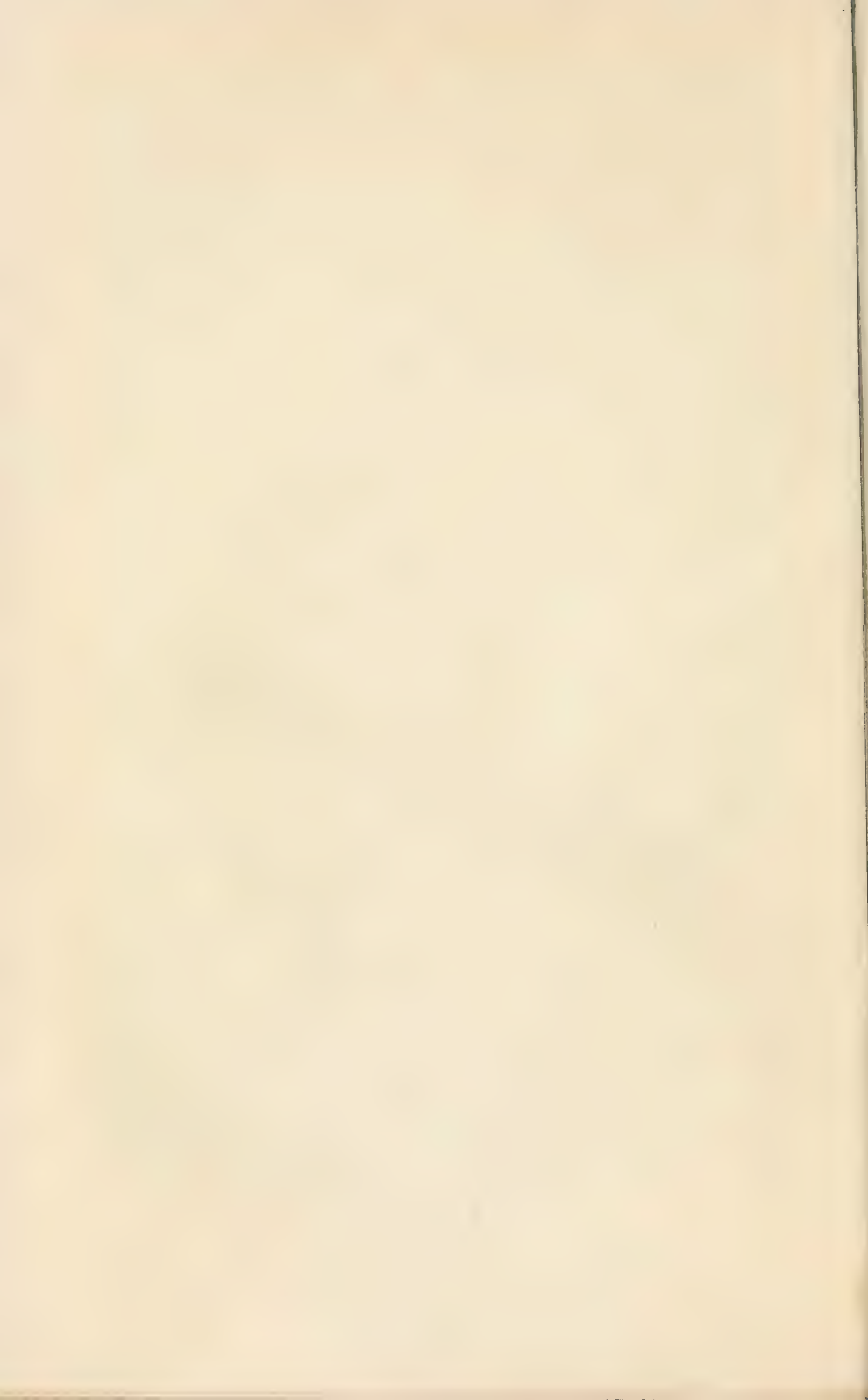
IN the early days of 1919, the mass of the Viennese population, although half-starved, had no forewarning of the appalling and unprecedented financial crisis which was shortly to overwhelm their country and which has steadily become worse and worse. In the Spring of 1919 the exchange fluctuated between one hundred and fifty to two hundred kronen to the pound. The fall from the pre-war twenty-five to the pound was considered almost a state of bankruptcy, but the majority of the financial magnates believed, or deceived themselves into believing, that it was only a temporary collapse, which would speedily right itself with the coming of peace.

The financial chaos throughout Europe, which has followed in the wake of the war was foreseen by few of the prominent European financiers. The bankers of Vienna who, like all bankers, think on international lines, never imagined that the Entente Governments would allow the finances of the old Hapsburg Empire to collapse—not through any love of their former enemy, but merely as a precautionary measure to protect themselves.

Yet if the recognised financiers failed to foresee the colossal crash already casting its shadow before it, the lesser magnates, whose imagination did not extend beyond the walls of Vienna or frontiers of Austria, suffered from no such illusions. The Jew money-changers and arbitrage speculators who did their business outside the great banks, in the cafés and hotel corridors, amongst



THE EMPEROR FRANZ-JOSEF





the thousands who, ever since 1919, have made fortunes or lost them speculating on "change" between Vienna and Zurich, thought very differently. For once the big men were all wrong in their appreciation of the situation, and the little ones right. It would take an entire book to describe the fever of speculation and gambling which has prevailed in Vienna throughout the last three years. Such a work would be one of absorbing interest. Most of the speculators eventually lost their fortunes because there has never been any finality to the fall of the krone. Those who bought kronen at one thousand to the pound expected to reap a rich harvest by buying back pounds or dollars at a later date when the krone rose. But this longed-for hour has never arrived and the unhappy speculators who sold pounds for one thousand kronen must now, if they wish to repurchase sterling, pay anything from two hundred to three hundred thousand. The fundamental misconception as to the policy of the Entente towards Austria has been largely responsible for this wild speculation and fluctuation in values. On every side one heard the local optimist remarking: "Austria will never be allowed to go under. The Entente will put her finances straight. A large loan in sterling is all that is needed." In fact the patient Austrians have lived for three or four years on hopes and are now hanging half over the brink of the precipice of utter ruin. Had anyone in 1919 sat down calmly and worked out Austria's future on paper according to figures, the result would certainly have shown that the country could only drift to bankruptcy. But there was always the belief prevalent in the minds—not only of the Austrians themselves, but amongst the European Missions in the country, that the Conference of Paris would insist on re-establishing the old Empire, if not on a dynastic, at least on an economic basis. Such a step would undoubtedly have gone far towards checking the rot which was rapidly setting in. Without some such reorganization, Austria was inevitably doomed to die a slow and lingering

death from material exhaustion, and financial and economic decay.

Formerly Vienna was the capital of an Empire of some forty-five millions of inhabitants. She is now cut off from her heterogeneous family of disloyal offspring, and finds herself the capital of a small state of some six millions of people, with little agriculture and few industries—a vast city without a hinterland. Vienna has taken a long time to recognise the change in her fortunes and will never become reconciled to her lot. Her citizens believed their misfortunes were but temporary, and that the conglomeration of races which made up the old Empire must speedily return to the succour of their mother city. She wrung her hands, her doleful wails re-echoed throughout Europe, but not one of her children answered the maternal cry. Then the attitude of the mother changed. She began to realize that she had not been loved by her offspring, so she argued in this way: "They must eventually return to the maternal roof after they have enjoyed a brief spell of new-found liberty, because there is so much in the old home of which all stand in need." Her citizens thought with pride of their magnificent city with her railway systems converging from all parts of Europe, of the huge railway stations where, alas! the grass now grows between the lines, providing a little fodder for the starving cab-horses outside, of the broad Danube which conveys commerce from the Elbe to the Black Sea, of her great banks which formerly supplied the life blood of finance to the whole Empire, of her galleries, her museums, her stately buildings, huge palaces and innumerable statues recording the glories of the past; of her wide streets and immense systems of tramways which formerly conveyed her millions to profitable occupations, but which now only carried her starving population in search of food, at restricted hours of the day. Surely such a change could not last. It seemed incredible that such a cruel fate could overwhelm one of the greatest and most

ancient capitals of Europe, the home of the Hapsburgs throughout seven centuries. Yet day after day, Vienna remained isolated, starved, neglected by her offspring, and was only saved from complete collapse through the kindness of her enemies. Very often there was not one day's food supply left in the city, and the public services, such as tramways and electric light, had suddenly to be suspended because not a ton of coal remained in the bins.

In almost any other city in the world, a great social upheaval would have followed the disaster of the war. But the Viennese are different from all other people. They have never been accustomed to think for themselves and have always blindly followed their leaders. They are incapable of making a united effort to escape from the Slough of Despond into which they have sunk deeper and deeper. Travellers who visited Vienna in pre-war days, often remarked the slow and stately promenade of the good citizens along the Ringgasse, the hundreds of cafés crowded with people of all classes with apparently nothing to do, and the sounds of light opera airs coming from every restaurant, hotel, café, and cellar. The Viennese, ever the most idle and pleasure-loving community in the world, have continued to live true to their traditions in spite of misfortunes which would have broken the patience of Job himself. Thus, to the casual visitor arriving in Vienna in 1919, it often appeared as if the reports about starvation and general misery, which had reached him, must have been greatly exaggerated. But, in reality, the thousands whom one saw sipping cheap beer or "ersatz" coffee in the cafés and listening to the strains of the world-famous Viennese bands, had nowhere else to go, and no occupation of any sort to claim their time. They huddled together in the cafés because they could not support life in their freezing homes and rather than face such an ordeal they stayed from early morning until late at night in public resorts and then had to be forced into the streets at closing time. On one occasion, Schrober,



the genial Chief of Police, was told he ought to close the hotels and restaurants as it might excite the fury of the working men to see people thus idly enjoying themselves and consuming the city's limited supply of coal in the use of an unnecessary amount of electric light. But the wise old Schrober replied: "If I close the Vienna cafés to-morrow, there will be a revolution on the following day." These were words of commonsense and truth.

In reality one had to leave the main streets which are, after all, an infinitesimal part of a great city, to arrive at a correct understanding of the extreme state of misery and poverty into which the mass of the people had fallen. There one saw an endless succession of streets full of great holes, long since unswept, with dirt and refuse at every corner and traffic almost entirely suspended, abandoned to the shivering, huddled groups of humanity returning from the centres of food distribution to their ruined, coal-less and wood-less homes, or to groups of children trying to keep themselves warm by playing amidst the dirt and the snow, but apparently too feeble to move with sufficient energy to produce heat.

In spite of her troubles, Vienna was greatly overcrowded during the months following the Armistice. The city became a dumping-ground for refugees from all parts of Middle Eastern Europe, and large numbers of Austrians came in from the country, either from fear of revolutionary outbreaks, or because they found it no longer possible to obtain the necessities of life in outlying districts. In consequence, the hotels and restaurants were overcrowded to such an extent that it was often impossible to obtain either a room or a table. This cosmopolitan throng was composed of all nationalities, Austrians, Hungarians, Germans, intriguing to bring about the "Anschluss" (alliance with Germany); Turks belonging to the old régime; Russians flying from Bolshevism (rubbing shoulders with Lenin's emissaries come to stir it up); Poles, Ruthenians, Ukrainians, Yugoslavs, Czechs, Slovaks, Greeks, Ruman-



ians, and every tribe and race of Central and Eastern Europe. Amidst these discordant elements there stalked the dignified figures of the Entente Missions, sent to carve up what remained of this unhappy land; British, French, Italians, Americans, and Japanese. From the very first these countless Missions, all of which had to be kept at the expense of the Austrians, began to eat up the few remaining resources of the country. In fact, throughout this period there was no more ridiculous spectacle than our Reparation Commissions laboriously preparing returns as to what Austria could pay as damages, and our Food Missions working in the same building, striving night and day to find means of supplying the starving population with the bare necessities of life. A little later unofficial Missions began to arrive, for the "Feed the Children" cry was now beginning to make itself heard throughout Europe, and the "Society of Friends" and kindred organizations did noble work and saved thousands of lives.

Occupied by so many races and racked by so many divergent currents of political thought, Vienna became a city of rumours, unrest and romance. Political movements in far distant lands vibrated through its cafés, and tales of every variety and degree of absurdity circulated as the gospel truth for a few hours every day, before being cast into the limbo of untruths.

Among this conglomeration of nationalities and creeds, the Jew stood out prominently and dominated every situation. Jews of every race were to be found amongst this cosmopolitan throng, and as the Jew knows no frontiers except the faith of his co-religionists, he was generally first in possession of news true or false and was thus able to control the great speculative market, for almost everyone, not even excepting the Foreign Missions, was engaged in speculation on "Change" or in buying and selling goods. One only sees the Jew in his real element during these world cataclysms, it is only then that his peculiar qualities have full scope for their employment.

Thus, dying Austria became the happy hunting-ground for the Jewish vulture, although Foreign "*Aas Vogels*" were also plentiful. The Kis Zsido, or small Jews, thrived on the general misery, for the big Jews having their money already invested in the banks, industrials, and land, saw it disappear in the same manner as the Gentiles. The little Jews swarmed over Vienna, and devoured its decaying remains like flies round a raw steak on a hot summer's day. One could hardly walk in the street without treading on them. The city, its institutions, finance and material wealth crumbled in their hands and they crowded out the hotels, restaurants, cafés and shops.

The great unpopularity of this class of Jew is undoubtedly due to several factors, the chief of which are these: they thrive on other people's misfortunes: they do but little work of lasting profit to the community as a whole; they are the greatest speculators on "Change" and in the necessities of life, and they exact the largest percentage of profit from every transaction; they can never conceal their prosperity: that is to say, if the financial position of the Kis Zsido in the Middle East improves from day to day, one can follow the rise and fall with absolute accuracy by the Jew's outward demeanour towards the rest of mankind, by his clothes, his meals, his place in the restaurants, and very often by the changing of his female friend for a more showy and extravagant type. Thus, on these occasions of financial wreck and ruin, although he probably makes the most money, he also attracts to himself the largest amount of odium, and the vengeance of the infuriated mob is invariably directed against him with greater ferocity than against anyone else.

These were in fact the halcyon days for the small Jewish speculators. They had Pounds sterling, Dollars, French Francs, Rumanian Lei, Austrian Kronen, Hungarian Kronen, Greek Dinars, Polish Marks, Russian Roubles and German Marks, all making the wildest fluctuations on "Change" every twenty-four hours, on which to operate.

It became in fact a kind of guess-work competition in which hundreds made money, and hundreds went to the wall day by day, and then vice-vêrsa the next.

The Zurich exchange was the accepted authority for all settlements, and every night in Vienna thousands went to bed with a silent prayer on their lips that their particular fancy amongst the world's currencies would not have a sudden fall during the night, leaving them "broke" and penniless on the following morning. Owing to this intense speculation in foreign currencies, the Austrian krone fluctuated in the most extraordinary manner, often varying from three to four hundred kronen to the pound sterling in twenty-four hours, until now it varies in thousands. The Government endeavoured in vain to put a stop to the speculative fever by making all dealings in foreign exchanges illegal and by ordering the immediate surrender of all foreign monies to the Division Zentrale, to be paid for in kronen at an official rate fixed for the day. But the Government was quite impotent to carry out its own ordinances, and it has been proved that a large number of permanent officials were secretly engaged in speculation. Huge fortunes were made on paper in twenty-four hours, and lost the next. The great difficulty all the speculators had to face was to turn their profits into a currency with some stability, if they ever wished to retire with their winnings. But with the Government turning out millions of kronen per week, it was easy to acquire an immense fortune in kronen, but extremely difficult to turn it back again into pounds sterling, francs, dollars, or any of the more stable exchanges of Europe. Thus only an infinitesimal proportion of the speculators really made money in the end, and the majority of them must now be starving in Vienna or else have taken to other more profitable fields of activity. A few of the wise ones got out in time, or else deserted the krone early on and went in for gambles in marks, lei, dinars, roubles and Italian lira.

The constant fall of the krone produced amazing panics



and led to the wildest orgies of buying goods and stocks. When it began gradually to dawn on the Viennese that the krone would eventually not be worth the paper it was printed on, there was a wild rush to purchase shares in what were formerly considered gilt-edged securities. These shares in consequence rose to unprecedented figures. I have known stocks which stood at one thousand kronen in 1919 now stand at one million, and even at this figure are not worth their pre-war price. The wild buying in the shops on days of panic beggars description. On a falling kronen market a store would be completely cleared out in a few hours by the frantic rush of the speculators to get rid of worthless paper in return for goods. This failed to benefit the shop-keepers because, on the following morning, they found themselves in possession of so many millions of kronen, not nearly equivalent in value to the goods they had sold during the rush on the previous day. Thus it became the custom, especially in the shops selling articles of luxury, to demand payment in some recognised European currency, such as pounds sterling, marks, or francs.

Every kind of device was resorted to in order to obtain advance reports of the closing prices on the world's Exchanges. Some with inside influence managed to get secret information a few minutes before the opening of the Vienna Bourse and, by giving their orders on the Curb, they were able to reap a rich harvest, until the frequency of their successes aroused the suspicions of their victims. The advance news generally leaked out through the telegraph clerks, who, endeavouring to eke out a living on starvation wages, were naturally open to corruption. Another favourite method was the invention and exploitation of favourable reports to influence the exchange. Suddenly a wild rumour would spring from God knows where and go round the cafés like magic, that the Entente was about to offer a loan in sterling to Austria to enable her to re-establish her finances. The wish being father to the



thought, there would be a wild rush to buy kronen, causing a big rise in their value. It is beyond my powers of calculation to say how many times this favourite report was trotted out and believed. It certainly had a longer run than "Charley's Aunt," and, like that immortal play, is, I believe, still running. Another favourite method of influencing the exchange was through the press. Articles friendly to Austria written by foreigners in the Vienna papers, or quotations from the foreign press in a like vein were employed to make the public believe that a radical change of policy was about to be inaugurated in favour of Austria. One could make the starving and ruined Austrians believe anything and thus, for four years they have clung to one straw after another, only to see each in turn swept away in the troubled current of European discord. Another favourite method was to obtain interviews with foreign financiers visiting Vienna, and to lay great stress on any words of hope which fell from their lips. Every stranger arriving in the capital was in honour bound to say he would do his best to bring the lamentable state of the country home to the powers that be, and these words, no matter who uttered them, would suffice to create a Bull Market amongst Viennese speculators.

For two years it was extremely easy to influence the Vienna money and stock market, but as month after month rolled by without any of the promised improvements in the financial and economic state of the country materialising, the krone became more stubborn in its determination not to improve, and, finally gathering irresistible way which no rumours or promises could check, it has fallen to four hundred thousand to the pound.

Only a short time elapsed after the Armistice when it became generally known throughout Europe that Vienna was the happy hunting-ground for buying everything cheap—from a Royal Palace to a watch—owing to the fall in the exchange. Then followed the rush of foreign visitors. Undeterred by the discomforts of the journey,

buyers, both professional and amateur, hastened from all parts of the world to tempt the shop-keepers to part with their goods in return for foreign valuta. One could pick up extraordinary bargains in these early days, especially as this period of cheap buying in Vienna corresponded with the immense rise in prices which characterized 1919 in all other countries. For instance, a gold cigarette case which cost fifty pounds in Bond Street, could be obtained for ten pounds in Vienna. Furs were also, for a time, excellent bargains, and all kinds of "objets d'art" not coming within the supreme category of world masterpieces, were also to be had in great quantities for small cash payments. Old silver and linen were obtainable at ridiculously low prices, and motor-cars also formed an attractive item. Excellent Austrian-made cars could be bought for the equivalent of one hundred and fifty to two hundred pounds. But the best bargains were to be found in the purchase of real estate in and around Vienna. At this period many Austrians were glad to sell their property for a large inducement in kronen, a mere drop in the ocean to the buyer in a foreign valuta. For instance, if a proprietor sold his estate on a basis of from five hundred to one thousand kronen to the pound, the seller thought he had done extremely well, believing that eventually the krone would fall back to one hundred and fifty or one hundred, and perhaps eventually to par. Of course those who sold their property under this delusion have been completely ruined. Every time these unfortunates pass their houses in town, or their estates in the country, they must sigh bitterly at the recollection of having exchanged what would have remained a tangible asset for all time, for paper which now costs less than that on which they shave at dawn.

Many of the unfortunate Austrians of good family were obliged to sell their private property in order to live. The increase in the cost of living, coinciding with the daily fall of the krone, rendered it almost impossible for the lower

middle classes and state officials with fixed salaries, or the landowners with but small rents, to exist. Thus day by day they were obliged to sell their household goods. Those articles which did not come within the category of necessities of life, such as family jewels, furs, silver and plate went first, and they were followed in rapid succession by dresses and furniture, and finally even the beds had to go, until hundreds of homes were left without a stick of furniture, everything having been ruthlessly sacrificed to keep body and soul together in purchasing food.

In 1919, an immense amount of jewellery left Vienna for foreign countries, until the stocks became exhausted and it was difficult to purchase any more. The Swiss dealers, the first in the field, were the most enterprising of buyers and they reaped immense profits by re-selling in the great orgy of extravagance that distinguished 1919, which led to the ruin of so many when the slump in prices came in 1920 and 1921. The Government made it illegal to take jewellery out of the country, but this ordinance was evaded, like so many others framed to prevent speculation, and to keep realizable wealth in Austria. During this boom in jewellery, it was rare to enter one's hotel without being touched on the shoulder by some individual, very often of the most shady character, to judge from his outward garb, with something glistening in his hand, upon which, if a buyer, one beckoned the stranger into the seclusion of a private room, or to some dark corner of the corridor. Then a minute inspection of his wares took place followed by the usual haggling over the price, always a long and wearisome process. This secrecy was very necessary, because it is illegal to buy jewellery or precious stones in Vienna, except from licensed dealers; but no one took the slightest notice of this ordinance. Occasionally, the police made arrests, but in the universal struggle for existence, even the government agents were too busy trying to augment their wretched salaries, to look too harshly on departures from the strict letter of the law in others. Many a journey



have I made to the remoter districts of Vienna, to climb up narrow, dirty stairs to see what has been described as a "superb diamond"; "flawless pearl"; or "peerless sapphire"; supposed to be going for a mere song, but in nine cases out of ten the excursions were sheer waste of time as the gems turned out to be full of flaws and of little value and the prices demanded exorbitant.

The orgy of buying and speculation in Vienna reached unprecedented heights throughout the winter and spring of 1919. It caught hold of one like the "grippe" and one could not shake it off. It affected high and low, rich and poor. People hastened from all parts of the world to take part in this legalized looting of the ancient capital of the Hapsburgs. The Turks were driven back from the gates of Vienna in 1683, but nothing could stop the "Pilliards des Wagons Lits" as they came to be called, who struggled and fought for places in the three trains per week, in order to arrive in time to get something before everything was sold. There was not a foreigner in Vienna who was not stricken by this fever; the visitors, the representatives of the Press, the Heads of Missions and all their staffs, right down the scale to the lady typists. The latter—that strange phenomenon produced by the war—who follow their leaders all over Europe and whose Remingtons can be heard ticking from the Seine to the Niemen, producing document after document, report after report, eating up the finances of every country in their endeavours to save mankind and civilization from irretrievable disaster, when all the time disaster, disease, famine and financial ruin are running miles ahead of them, for even the producer of one hundred and sixty words a minute cannot keep pace with the fall in the foreign exchanges. The moment official hours were over for the day, the whole of the staffs of the Missions rushed into the streets, tumbled over one another in the shops and held receptions in the hotel corridors, receiving anyone who had anything to sell, buying, buying, buying, anticipating their salaries and



sending home their purchases in the care of venerable, hoary-headed King's Messengers, at the Government's expense and under Government seals. What a life! What a game! There is nothing which brings such exquisite joy to human nature as the obtaining of something for nothing. The greatest prize held out to man has ever been the prospect of looting great cities. For the promise of this the soldier will risk death, disease and every extreme of hardship. For a similar reason the lady typist will leave her home, and endure the discomforts of long, intolerable journeys in filthy trains, suffer extremes of heat and cold, live for long, weary months on bad food and "ersatz" tea amidst the ruins of fallen Empires. It is true that the laws of war no longer permit of the looting of cities by victorious armies, but none have yet been framed to check the rapacity of the stenographer or the master she has followed from the Thames to the lower reaches of the mighty Danube. What occurred in Vienna in 1919 may accurately be described as the modern method of sacking a conquered city.

Every morning the buyers held levées in their hotel to receive dealers in precious stones, furs, gold, silver, "objets d'art" and "bric-a-brac" of all kinds, who followed one another in an endless procession and with deadly rivalry. Others received speculators in stocks and shares and industrial enterprises. One would have a derelict railroad to sell for a song, another an oil field, a third a mine in Hungary or Rumania, a fourth a huge forest in Bulgaria, and a fifth a gigantic scheme for supplying some city with water power, which only required European capital to ensure its success. Neither must one forget the real estate agents with their castles in the country, modern, middle-aged, old and historic, and their blocks of buildings in Vienna itself—all for sale at prices which would have to be multiplied a hundredfold in comparison with what it would cost to build them anew.

## CHAPTER III

### HUNGARY ON THE EVE OF BOLSHEVISM

In the first days of March, 1919, I accompanied our Military Attaché, Colonel Sir Thomas Cunninghame, Bt. to Budapest. Cunninghame had been Military Attaché in Vienna before the War, and knows the politics and politicians of these countries as well as anyone. He is, above all, an excellent Intelligence Officer, with a remarkable capacity for collecting information. On this occasion he assured me Budapest was the real centre of interest, and that dramatic events might shortly be expected there.

I found the old capital of Hungary sadly changed, but not reduced to the same state of extreme misery as Vienna. During the war there had never been the same food shortage in Hungary as in other parts of Germany and Austria, as the vast Hungarian plains provide the finest granaries in Europe. Austria had only been kept going in the later stages of the war by the doles eked out to her from the reduced Hungarian stocks.

But if the food situation was less acute, the political atmosphere was charged with currents which seemed likely to burst forth at any moment into an upheaval, which might menace the existing social structure of all the neighbouring states. The Armistice had been signed, the Monarchy had fallen, and the Republic inaugurated under that sinister figure, Count Michael Karolyi, whose name to-day is more loathed and execrated than that of any of the Bolshevist leaders. On the signing of the Armistice, the Minister of War had stated that it would take three years to demobilize the army, and to return the troops to

their ordinary civil occupations. As a matter of fact the army demobilized itself, without waiting for the order of the Minister of War, in exactly three days ! The troops in the second lines abandoned their colours, and returned to their homes in any available trains. They had been gradually seduced from their allegiance to the throne and suffered from the anti-militarist propaganda of Karolyi and his agents, for Karolyi, from the first, worked to establish a Republic, and to seize the reins of power for himself and his satellites. The disorder spread to the front line troops, but many divisions kept up a gallant resistance to the end. This disbanded army of over a million men swept through the country like a gigantic flood, suddenly loosed by the bursting of a dam ; and hundreds of thousands of armed soldiers arrived at Budapest, and other big cities, without officers or discipline, animated by a single desire, namely, to return to their homes as quickly as possible. Thus the army was never officially demobilized, the arms and accoutrements were never handed in, and the germs of future disorders were scattered broadcast through the land.

In the early days of March, 1919, however, in spite of the inward seething of the coming revolution, Budapest presented much the same appearance as in pre-war days, and life went on without any manifest change. The town was packed, like Vienna, with an enormous number of refugees, chiefly Jews from Russia, Poland, Galicia and Rumania. It was only within the privacy of the houses of the great magnates that one learnt the extreme gravity of the situation. Karolyi's Republic was one in name only, and had done away with most of the liberties which the individual had formerly possessed under the old constitution.

Already Lenin's emissaries, of whom the famous Bela Kuhn was the chief, had obtained a firm grip upon the administration and a still firmer one on the unfortunate President himself. He was but the shadow : the substance lay behind him in the grim presence at his elbow, of such

Communists as Bela Kuhn, Böehm (Minister of War), Pogany, Argoston, Kunfi, and many other sinister figures. Freedom of the press was suppressed, together with the right of free speech and assembly; arbitrary arrests were made daily, and the former septuagenarian Prime Minister, Wekerle, had been cast into gaol.

The supporters of the old régime trembled within the privacy of their houses, while many, foreseeing the coming day of retribution for the calamities of the past, had already left for the country, imagining themselves safer within the borders of their huge estates, amongst their own peasants whom they believed would remain loyal to them through thick and thin. The mob of Budapest was in an angry mood, owing to the privations and hardships of the war, and anti-Semitic and anti-Dynastic outbreaks were expected at any hour.

A short explanation of the social constitution of Hungary is necessary to a proper understanding of the events which followed, and which so nearly convulsed all Europe. The Hungarians are in many respects a great and powerful race. Europe owes them a debt of gratitude for their strenuous resistance to Turkish dominion, which checked the Ottoman menace to civilisation. The Hungarian responsibility for, and participation in, the Great War must now be judged from very different standpoints from those we were accustomed to blind ourselves with during five years of war, when, soused with propaganda and struggling for existence, we regarded all our enemies as equally guilty of disturbing the peace of the world. The friendship between England and Hungary has ever been traditional, and there is absolutely no reason why it should have been disturbed in 1914, when there did not exist a single point in dispute which even required discussing. But the entangling alliances of both nations dragged two well-tried old friends into a world war on opposite sides. We in England believed we were more than justified in going to war on account of German aggression against





COUNT MICHEL KAROLYI  
President of the Hungarian Republic



France and her desire for world dominion. The invasion of Belgium was the ostensible overt act which enabled us to throw off all hesitation and to range ourselves on the side of France and Belgium. Now the Hungarians believed that they were justified in going to war for almost precisely similar reasons. They felt it was a life-and-death struggle for existence between the pressure exercised on their country by Russia from the north and the Southern Slavs from the south. Every true Hungarian considered the moment had arrived to settle the Southern Slav question once and for all.

On the merits of this complicated case, I am not prepared to pronounce an opinion. I simply state the facts in order to point out that, whereas every Englishman who fought in Western Europe felt all moral right was on his side, in like manner every Hungarian who fought in Eastern Europe felt the moral right was on his. In consequence, both sides fought with a courage and determination almost unparalleled in history. The Hungarian Nation, in fact, lost a heavier proportion in dead than any other except the gallant Serbians. Out of a total Magyar population of roughly ten millions, one million men perished on the frontiers of Italy, in the Balkans, in the Carpathian Mountains, or amidst the vast plains and snows of Russia and Galicia.

Why, it may be asked, did the Hungarians have this intense fear of Russian and Southern Slav aggression? The answer is very simple. In 1848 the Hungarian nation was struggling under Kossuth to throw off the Austro-German dominion, and to obtain a constitution of its own. The Hungarians beat the Austrians decisively, and Hungary would have become an independent kingdom, but for the action of the Czar Nicholas I who, in order to uphold the principal of the divine right of Kings, marched a huge army into Hungary, routed the patriots, executed the leaders, and handed back this gallant people to the young Emperor Franz Joseph. I shall not deal with the subse-

quent steps by which Hungary acquired her autonomy within the Austro-Hungarian Empire, with a constitution of her own, and accepted Franz Joseph as her king. This has turned out to be her ruin, for her entangling alliance with Austria—and in consequence with Germany—has led to the terrible disaster which has now overwhelmed her people and reduced her territories to one-third of their former size. But in fairness to the Hungarians it must be remembered that the events of 1848 have left an indelible hatred and mistrust of Russia, and of the Southern Slavs, in their minds, and all other issues were obscured when the crash came in August, 1914. I do not think the attitude of the Hungarians is to be wondered at. Supposing Scotland, for instance, had been engaged with England in 1848 in a desperate struggle for freedom and independence and had won the day. Supposing that at the eleventh hour, a huge French Army had landed in Scotland, conquered the country, executed the leading nobles, and handed the people back to England. Is it likely under similar circumstances a single Scot would have been found fighting side by side with the French in the World War?

On the other hand, Hungary's attitude towards the Serbs during the years which preceded the war cannot be justified, and her statesmen undoubtedly committed immense political blunders in the handling of these delicate frontier, religious, and commercial questions.

It is only fair, therefore, when considering the facts, to place the guilt of the Hungarians on an entirely different basis from that of the Germans. When the war broke out, no Hungarian in his wildest dreams ever expected to find himself embroiled with either England or France. They expected the war would be localized, and this same miscalculation was made by many other statesmen in other countries. During the course of the war, the English and Hungarian troops never met in battle except in the very last stage on the Italian frontier; and the same



remark holds true of the French. In consequence there was never, at any period of the struggle, any bitterness against the British; and very little—until after the Armistice—against the French. In fact, Hungary is the only country, as far as I know, where British subjects—habitual residents before the war—were allowed to move about without let or hindrance, and were never interned. Amongst others were the two brothers Goodwillie, the golf professionals, and these two continued to give lessons and to steer Hungarians clear of the many bunkers on the course, in a way their statesmen proved quite incapable of doing in the field of politics.

Thus, at the termination of the war, the Hungarians—to an even greater degree than the Austrians—were incapable of understanding why England should have any enmity towards them, and expected in consequence very different treatment than that which they received when the time came for their appearance before the Supreme Council of Paris. The majority of the Hungarian nobles who had known England before the war expected to be received back with open arms the moment the drums ceased their rolling. Complete disillusionment has been their sad lot, and even now, only a very few have ventured back to their old haunts in Paris and London.

Prior to the war, the Hungarian magnates were just as much at home in London and Paris as in Budapest. They were accustomed to live a portion of the year on their vast estates, indulging in the pleasures of the chase; some months were passed amidst the delights of Budapest, and the remainder of the year in travel abroad. They hunted foxes in England and ladies in Paris; they bought their clothes, boots and saddlery in London, and one of the chief hardships of the war was their inability to replace their worn-out wardrobes in Bond Street, Piccadilly, and the neighbouring streets. Almost every Hungarian of good family can speak English in a manner few Englishmen ever approach when venturing on the troubled sea of a

foreign tongue. In fact, the Hungarian magnate closely resembles our own upper class in its habits of life, customs and manners. The Hungarian loves all that makes life agreeable, music, dancing, hunting, flirting, and dabbling in politics. But now we must note certain essential differences between the races. The Hungarian nobleman of the twentieth century more closely resembles the Englishman of the early part of the nineteenth in his habits, manners, and train of thought. He has not progressed or caught up with the spread of the democratic idea in the same manner as the Englishman. But this is hardly to be wondered at when one remembers that the Hungarian constitution only dates from 1867. Neither has he that serious side to his character which the Englishman has developed, owing to the law of primogeniture, which has obliged the younger scions of most of our great families to enter the common fight for existence in all parts of our vast Empire.

It is just the lack of these essential qualities which have done so much for England, that has reduced Hungary to her present sad plight. The aristocracy, with but few exceptions, have never been trained to any useful profession and possess little practical aptitude either for politics or affairs. These qualities will have to be acquired in the hard school of adversity, if Hungary is ever to repair her fallen fortunes and make for herself an honoured place in the Comity of European Democracies. Hungary, in 1914, was one of the last old Feudal States of Europe. The Feudal System was not quite the same as existed in England in the Middle Ages, but bore so close a resemblance to it as to be hardly distinguishable, unless one looked below the surface. Feudalism—one might describe it—modified by the advance of civilization and the continual passage of the "Wagons-Lits" from all parts of Europe through Hungarian territory. At the top stood the king, the representative of the Crown of St. Stephan; then came the great nobles, the counts or magnates, as

they are known throughout Europe. They were the great landowners holding vast estates providing every necessity of life, on which they could live if they wished without ever having to go near a town or a village. They could weave their own cloth, breed their own horses, reap their own harvests, kill their own live stock and hunt for days on end without passing the confines of their properties. Beneath the Counts came the big farmers, corresponding to the Mediæval Squires, also owning land of their own, which had been sold or leased to them by the great landowners. Beneath the farmers came the small peasant proprietors, also owning small plots of land which they cultivated for their own use, while part of their time was spent working on the big estates for small wages. Beneath the small peasant proprietors came the labouring agriculturists, the Feudal Serfs who owned no land but worked exclusively on the big estates in return for small wages and certain produce in kind. Amongst this latter class there was, even before the war, a very genuine land hunger. The other great landowner of the country was the Church, which owned enormous tracts of the very best land that the Bishops cultivated like any other of the great proprietors. This same organization of the classes had existed in Hungary for close on one thousand years, passing through the periods of Turkish dominion, Austrian aggression, and Russian invasion, almost unchanged. In 1914 there seemed to be little or no desire amongst the mass of the people for a change, and it needed the incentive of five years of disastrous warfare, followed by an armistice, the severity of which was merely the precursor of an even more disastrous peace, to cause the mass of the nation to lose faith in their old institutions, and to turn despairingly to any form of new government which could promise them a respite from war, want and misery, and hold out to them prospects of a brighter future.

In the composition of the social life of Hungary the Jews play a rôle the importance of which cannot be over-

estimated. They are a race apart, mingling socially but little, and seldom marrying with the pure Magyar stock. But a great part of the wealth of the land has fallen into their hands. They are responsible for the administration of all the leading banks; they direct nearly all the great, industrial concerns, and they supply a very large proportion of the lawyers and civil administrators. The intrinsic wealth of Hungary lies in her incomparable agricultural land, and now she is almost entirely dependent on it since the Treaty of the Trianon has robbed her of practically all her industrial and coal producing districts. An enormous number of estates have been mortgaged to the Hypotheken Banks and as it is now extremely difficult to pay off these mortgages, owing to the fall in the krone, the land itself is rapidly passing into the hands of alien owners. Many of the great landowners are now hard put to it to meet the interest on the capital sums advanced. The Jews hold Hungary in a grip of iron and it is difficult to see how that grip will ever be released.

There is a tendency at the present time, following the custom of past ages, to attribute all the misfortunes of nations, of whatever nature, to the Jews; but, taking the case of Hungary, it is difficult to see who could have developed the country into the immensely wealthy State it was in 1914, except the Jews. If there is but a comparatively small and unimportant middle class and no upper class trained to affairs, it is only natural for the alien, whose speciality is finance and commerce, to step in and take their place. Neither have the Jews abused their position. Yet they have been saddled with the responsibility for Bolshevism, and for all the horrors and absurdities committed during the Bolshevik régime in Hungary. But here again we are up against a difficult question, which has never been answered, namely, the difference in the attitude of the Nagy Zsido (Big Jew) and the Kis Zsido (Little Jew) towards modern-day politics and social problems. It is a very prevalent tendency to



believe that all Jews, big or little, intellectual or uneducated, are so closely bound together by their religious ties that, notwithstanding distinctions of nationality and citizenship, they will always prefer to stand together as a common brotherhood, separated for twenty centuries by persecution and misery, rather than adopt the customary test of patriotism, which consists of standing through thick and thin by the country in which one is born and bred. There is supposed to be a secret freemasonry amongst all Jews which exercises a priority of right over all other considerations, even those in which the self-interest of the parties themselves is affected.

Thus there is still a firm belief amongst a large number of intelligent thinkers in Central Europe that the Rothschilds and other great Jewish bankers of London and Paris are the secret supporters of Lenin and Trotsky, and that the sinister events in Russia are merely part of a great world-revolution which the chosen race are determined to bring about, in order that all wealth and all power shall eventually fall into their hands and those prophecies of a greater Zion embracing, not only the parched soil of Palestine, but the whole universe—so well chronicled in that curious book “The Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion”—be fulfilled. But I am bound to say I saw no sign of any sympathy on the part of the rich Jewish bankers and business men of Budapest towards the Soviets; on the contrary, they were the first to flee from the wrath to come, and never returned—with one or two notable exceptions—until after the Rumanian occupation of the capital in the summer of 1919.

The schism amongst the Jews in Central Europe, then, really amounts to little more than the eternal struggle between the “Haves” and the “Have Nots.” The Jew adopts the doctrines of Communism and Bolshevism with such enthusiasm, because for 2,000 years he has suffered nought but persecution and from lack of equal chances in Eastern Europe, and he feels that the only way to gain

what he has lost is to stir up the soil of world finance into its virgin properties once again, in order to start afresh, because he knows with his superior intelligence and capacity for affairs, that the whole of the wealth thus ruthlessly taken from others will speedily pass into his hands, now that the shackles and restrictions of the Middle Ages no longer exist. Very naturally, the rich Jew who has made his fortune has no liking for these tactics. He belongs to the "Haves" and has no desire to become the sport of the "Have Nots," even though they be of his race and religion.

Now in no community does one find such extreme distinctions of poverty and wealth as amongst the Jews, in spite of their well-advertised generosity towards one another. The Jew is not a working-man or creator of industrial wealth and seldom cares to work for a fixed rate of wage. This is not his *métier*. His life is the building-up of a fortune from trading usury and petty deals of all kinds. When the opportunity for the successful exploitation of these talents is denied him, as it has been denied to millions of his tribe in Russia, he remains the most miserably poor of mankind and his mind is ripe for a revolution or the adopting of any new political creed which, by breaking up the existing social organization of nations, and causing wealth to change hands, or to be thrown into the melting pot once again, will give him the chance for which he has waited so long and so patiently.

In addition to the wealthy Jews content with their lot and therefore anxious to preserve the existing organization of society, and the poor Jews, eager for any change, there are the intellectual doctrinaires, who readily embrace Communism or Bolshevism, and who become in a short time the real directors of the movement, and rulers of the country stricken by the disease. This class is the most dangerous enemy which society has at the present day. Many of them are quite disinterested in money matters, and will not change their principles, even if they have acquired the wealth which formerly belonged to others.

They are animated by a fanatical hatred of the Gentiles, and they will go to any lengths to bring about the rule of their own race and the re-establishment of the Kingdom of Israel throughout the world. When the crash comes in Russia, as it most assuredly will, because Lenin is unable to reconstruct the ruined economic system of the country; or if Lenin endeavours, by concessions to the middle classes and foreign capitalists, to rebuild the social structure on much the same lines as it existed before, he will certainly find his most bitter enemies amongst the fanatical intellectuals and doctrinaires of the Children of Israel. Capitalism must triumph in the end, unless Europe is to dissolve into complete anarchy, and it is this class that will die fighting with its back to the wall.

How eagerly will the populace adopt a new school of political thought, or accept a new government at its face value, if they have suffered beyond all bearing under their former ruler. The Hungarians are neither republican by tradition or inclination, but they accepted the Republic of Karolyi with enthusiasm for a few weeks, hoping it would mean the end of their many trials and hardships, and also in the belief that their conversion to democracy would soften the hearts of the Entente leaders and assure the stricken nation easier terms of peace.

There were some who thought the Republic had come to stay and that the country would settle down under the Karolyi régime. But a few interviews with members of the Cabinet convinced me they were bent on moving towards the extreme left and establishing a Soviet on Russian lines the moment they felt powerful enough to throw off their republican disguise.

No leader ever found himself in a less enviable or more undignified position than Michael Karolyi during his brief period of power. Belonging to one of the most distinguished and ancient families in Hungary, married to the daughter of a great magnate and one of the first statesman of the land—Count Julius Andrassy—he was accused

by his old friends of having betrayed his country to the Entente; of having accepted bribes from the French; of having brought about a dishonourable armistice; of having destroyed the discipline of the army; and, finally, of having broken his oath to his King.

Thus Karolyi, having sacrificed his sworn allegiance to his King and his Country on the altar of personal ambition now found himself installed in the Palace at Buda, formerly the dwelling-place of Franz Joseph, the nominal head of a Republic, but surrounded by Lenin's agents, completely isolated from his old friends and unable to leave the precincts of the Palace without an armed guard. The Hungarians are very savage and summary in their methods of justice when aroused and many a young Count had sworn to be revenged on the man whom all considered had brought ruin and disgrace on his country.

Michael Karolyi thus exchanged all his old friends and political associates, his gay life, his lady-loves, his gambling and his clubs to become the titular head of a still-born Republic for a few weeks. His new colleagues and followers must have given him many terrible shocks when he recalled his gay youth and the former pleasures of his life in Budapest, Paris, and New York. His Ministers and supporters were composed of the lowest elements in the land, mostly little Jews who had never been heard of a few weeks previously, but who had sprung up like mushrooms in the night from the dung heap of defeat and disaster. Such men, such faces, such antecedents, surely such a low gang had never before usurped the power of a State with the glories and traditions of a thousand years, in so short a time, and under stranger circumstances. Bela Kuhn, although not in the Cabinet, was already looming large in the land. Fresh from Moscow and bearing the mandate of Lenin and Trotski, he was the real keeper of the Bolshevist conscience—the great apostle of anarchy and disruption sent to break up a Feudal community and to open the gates of Western Europe to the



new doctrines of Moscow. Böehm—personally one of the most agreeable of the lot, but a true Communist at heart—was a shoe-maker by profession and was now taken straight from the lathe to the Ministry of War. The sinister, dreamy Pogany—openly accused of being one of the assassins of Tisza, Hungary's one strong man who alone in this crisis, had he been alive, might possibly have rallied the solid elements against the minions of Moscow. Kunfi—a smiling humbug, believing in nothing, but hoping that something might arise in the general mix-up in which he might believe. Agoston, the apostate, as he was generally called, ex-professor, once the bitter enemy of the Jews against whom he had written a book, but now the sworn friend of the new administration. Following in the wake of the leaders came a crowd of wretched journalists of the lowest class, ready to embrace any cause for a consideration.

The interior of the Royal Palace gave a terrible shock to those who had known it in by-gone days. Outside everything looked so venerable, feudal, royal and splendid, but once you passed the portals the scene changed to dirt, squalor and anomaly. Slovenly Republican soldiers guarded the entrance, a crowd of place-men and hangers-on waited in the ante-rooms, while journalists surrounded the great ones, seeking for crumbs of information. In an inner room sat the Cabinet, composed of this strange band I have attempted to describe. It was over this collection of fanatics, adventurers, placemen and Kiszsidó, that the unfortunate Karolyi had to preside. Hated by his own class, he was despised by his followers. They knew he could never throw off the associations and habits of the past and become a true Bolshevist, and they only tolerated him as the titular head of the State until the time was ripe to throw off all disguise.

Amidst his dirty, ill-kempt colleagues the once immaculate and still well-dressed Michael appeared hopelessly out of place. He presented just as glaring a contrast as Philip

Egalité in silk and satin must have done amidst the "Sans Culottes" and "Dames du Halle" of the Terror, and his chances of eventually reaching the scaffold were equally as good. Karolyi, during this period, must have been the most lonely and unhappy man on earth. Only one genuine friend remained and she, unfortunately, exercised a most malicious political influence over him. Whether the Countess Karolyi was responsible for the changed views of her husband or he for hers I am not prepared to say, but the Countess suddenly developed a revolutionary enthusiasm which shocked and astounded her family and friends. She openly professed extreme republicanism and it was freely whispered that the only hero she truly admired was installed in the Kremlin at Moscow. Cursed with a lust for power and filled with misplaced ambitions, she was determined, if possible, to make for her husband just as big a name in history as Robespierre and Lenin, and to achieve her ends, she was prepared to ride roughshod over family, friends, and past traditions. Unfortunately for her plans, the character, antecedents, training and abilities of her husband were not equal to the task. Separated from her own class and former companions, repudiated by her family, who severed all connection with her, the Countess Karolyi rapidly developed a bitter hatred for all her old associations. She made a solemn recantation denouncing her friends, the former régime and her earlier political views. It is said on good authority that a friend from childhood's years, having ventured to send her a message asking for information as to what would be likely to happen next, received the following friendly note: "In a few days we shall set up a guillotine on the bridge and execute you all."

This awful threat sent a chill of horror throughout the aristocratic circles where she had formerly played a leading rôle. The disillusionment was sudden and unexpected, for her friends hoped that in the event of affairs taking a turn for the worse, they would at least receive ample warning

from the President's wife and some measure of protection from the violence of his followers. But notwithstanding the change in the political principles of the Countess Karolyi, however much she may be blamed for her attitude towards her former companions and for influencing her husband into a course of action which brought ruin on his country and disgrace and exile on himself, no one can doubt her affection and loyalty towards him. She remained a devoted wife and mother and could be charming to those who came in touch with her. Even the Bolsheviks, when in her presence, lost some of their rough edges. A model in fact of every domestic virtue, it is a thousand pities she should ever have embarked on the troubled sea of politics at such a crisis and thrown in her lot with those who, while generally making use of her husband, were secretly preparing to get rid of him at the first opportunity.

Shortly after my arrival in Budapest, I met the President for the first time in the company of Sir Thomas Cunninghame, at the Palace. After a brief wait in a magnificent Salle d'Attente, emblazoned with the arms and crown of St. Stephan, we were ushered into Karolyi's "Cabinet." The President was not alone, in fact he was never allowed to be alone, for his every step and every movement was dogged by a genuine Bolshevik, just to ensure that in no action, word or deed should there be any backsliding from the strict principles of the Bolshevik faith.

Karolyi is very tall, clean-shaven but for a small moustache, has a small head, high brow and an impediment in his speech, which he has struggled hard to eliminate. He is extremely agreeable in his manner and is always immaculately dressed. He is a thorough dilettante, a man of the world, cultured in Budapest, Paris, London and every haunt of luxury in Europe. He was affability itself, and explained the political situation in great detail, with Böehm carefully listening at his side. It was

nearly eight o'clock when we rose to bid him farewell. It is only with feelings of regret that one can regard the termination of a career which might have been brilliant and useful, if guided by sound judgment and good counsel, but which has ended in exile and shame. Three weeks later the little rôle of Karolyi, the unhappiest in his country's history, came to its inevitable end.

After my journey to Budapest, I returned to Vienna, quite convinced that the days of the Republic were numbered, and that it was only a question of a few weeks at most before the Communists openly threw off all disguise and seized the reins of power. Three weeks actually elapsed before the blow fell. Most of the prominent members of the old régime anticipated the catastrophe by clearing out of the country, or else by hiding very near the border before the storm burst over their devoted heads. Why, it has often been asked, if the Hungarian nation are at heart so attached to the monarchy and have enjoyed much the same system of Government for one thousand years, was it possible for a handful of Jewish adventurers, under a leader purposely despatched by Lenin from Moscow, to turn out the old political parties and seize the reins of power in a few weeks? What astonished onlookers most at the time was the absence of all organized opposition to the Republican and Bolshevik movement in Hungary. But the question is not difficult to answer, although it reflects but little credit on the old régime and on those who had exercised supreme power for so many years. The disasters of the war, the immense death roll, and the sufferings of the civil population and subsequent fall of the monarchy paralysed and discredited the previously existing political elements within the state. There was no single party which could declare its innocence before the people. The old institutions and political combinations fell through the sheer discredit which the fatal result of the war had brought on them. There was not a single man in the



country who exercised sufficient authority to come forward and face the crisis with a programme acceptable to the nation, and with a party on whom he could rely to carry it through. Creeping paralysis, mental and physical percolated through the social and political world. A sense of guilt and a sense of shame caused every political leader to hide his diminished head and to prefer to leave it to someone else to face the storm of opprobrium which was rising amongst the people. In addition to this, the assassination of Count Tisza had caused every member of the old régime to tremble in his shoes. No single measure could have been more judiciously chosen by the extremists than the murder of Hungary's one really strong man. It shows how well they knew their ground and prepared for the conflict with the old régime. Once Tisza was out of the way, they knew they had little to fear from any other leader.

The only person prepared to come forward with an alternative government was Michael Karolyi. He served the purpose of a stop-gap as did Kerenski. He hoped to found a permanent, political structure, with himself as the head, but he was not of the stuff of which real leaders are made, and his whole past was against him.

Karolyi was reviled by his old friends, but it is only fair to note that not one of them was prepared to produce an alternative programme to satisfy the pressing wants of the time. It is in political vacuums, like the one which arose in Hungary, that the Extremists see their chance, grasp the helm of state, and the ship being already on the rocks, it matters little or nothing to them whether she reaches the fairway of the ocean once again or breaks up where she lies. On such occasions the mass of the people, wandering blindly in the dark, are prepared to accept the rule or dictatorship of any political group which professes to be able to help them out of the impasse into which they have been led by the leaders whom they formerly trusted.

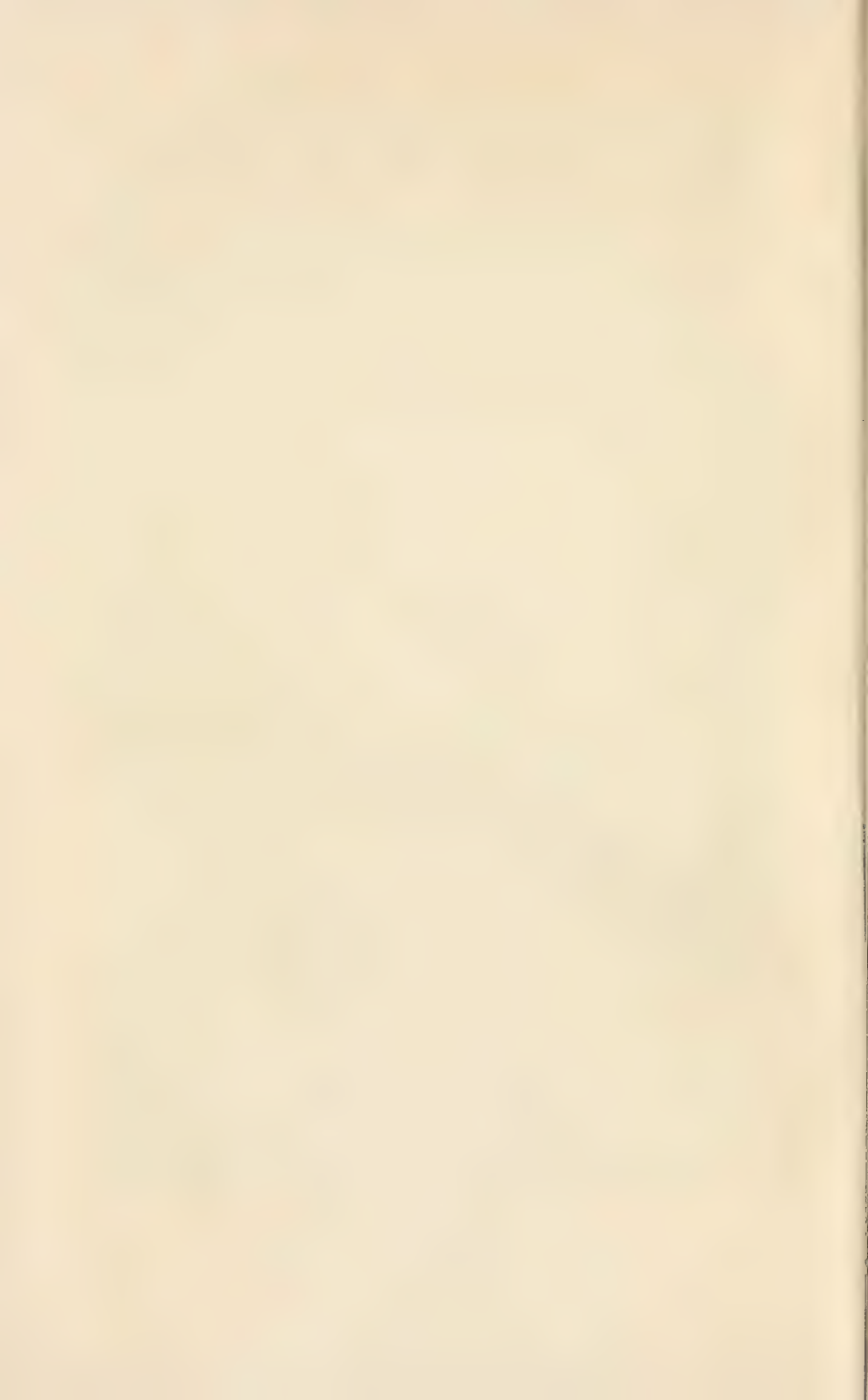
The other day, on the bleak Sussex Downs, the leader of

a flock of seventy-seven prize sheep was suddenly seized with the insane desire to inspect the interior depths of a long-disused well. He jumped in head foremost and his seventy-six companions blindly followed their leader and perished miserably. Their absence was only discovered by the tail of the seventy-seventh just appearing above the level of the ground, as he reposed on the corpses of his comrades. The Hungarian nation behaved in much the same way. The people blindly followed the first leader who came in sight into the well of Bolshevism, because the grass had grown too thin on all the neighbouring political pastures, and they were eventually pulled out by the Rumanians, not through motives of pity or affection, but because they thought they saw a ready supply of fresh meat to be had for the taking. None of the Sussex sheep survived their visit to the well, and only about one-third of what was formerly Hungary has survived the experiment of Bolshevism; but doubtless the lesson has been a salutary one, and the people will hesitate in the future before leaving their legitimate pastures and jumping into the first well marked "hope" that they happen to run across.

Thus, when the home-made and imported Soviet leaders took charge of Karolyi's still-born Republic, there was little or no opposition. The ground was well prepared and the rest was easy. Their repressive measures, including the curtailment of the freedom of the Press, all liberty of public speech and right of assembly, combined with open terrorism, stifled all opposition in the bud, and there was no one to come forward in opposition backed by a party and a programme. The blow fell so suddenly, the experiment was so new and the old political hates so fresh, that there was no time for former antagonists to sink their differences and to present a united front to the enemy of them all.



COUNT TISZA





## CHAPTER IV

### THE COMING OF BELA KUHN

It was at six p.m. on the afternoon of Saturday, March 22nd, when the news became known in Vienna of the fall of the Republic in Hungary, and the proclamation of the Soviet Government under Bela Kuhn. The city was overcome with stupefaction. Although coming events had cast many shadows before them, the realization came as a final blow, following the series of shocks which the capital had suffered since the fall of the monarchy. To Europe in general, and more especially to the Supreme Council in Paris, the *dénouement* came at a most awkward moment, because it might seriously compromise the prospects of establishing a stable peace with the enemy countries. It brought the odious doctrines of Moscow within a three hours' journey of Vienna, a day's journey of Berlin and only thirty-six hours of Paris.

Could the evil be localised? This was the main point at issue. Would it burn itself out in Hungary, or would it spread in an irresistible wave through all the neighbouring Republics and Monarchies in Middle Europe just raising their heads and taking their first breath of the new air of liberty and independence? Would the victors in the World War suddenly find the cup of victory dashed from their lips by a new race of thinkers with new political ideals—constitution smashers determined to tear down the whole structure of our social system and to build for themselves a new edifice amidst the ruins?

The news came as no surprise to me. The reports from

Budapest all pointed to the fall of Karolyi, and I had already arranged to leave for Budapest on the following morning, Sunday, March 23rd; accompanied by Mr. H. H. Macartney, the very able and enterprising correspondent of the "Times."

On Saturday evening Vienna was full of the wildest rumours: riots in Budapest, a terrible massacre of the old nobility and of the rich Jews, and the imprisonment by thousands of all those suspected of being supporters of the old régime. The Viennese, having no precise information on what was taking place in Budapest, assumed that whatever had happened in Moscow under Lenin and Trotsky would be repeated in Hungary under Lenin's agent, Bela Kuhn.

On Sunday, March 24th, Macartney and myself went to the station to join the Paris-Bucharest express. The train arrived packed with members of various Military and Civil Missions. When they heard for the first time of the establishment of the Soviet régime, the majority were overwhelmed with astonishment and consternation. All wished to know whether the train would leave for Budapest or not, but finally orders came from the French Military Mission, diverting the precious trainload of officials to Bucharest by the Southern route, *viâ* Belgrade. The Missions for Budapest and Warsaw had therefore to bundle out and make their way to the hotels to await fresh instructions or other means of reaching their destinations. Macartney and I were obliged to return to the hotel to work out a fresh plan of campaign. The Orient express, diverted to the new route, was not destined to see Budapest again for many long months.

As I was leaving the station, a lady dressed in deep black and heavily veiled spoke to me. I recognized her as Countess Ella Dessewffy, whom I had met three weeks before at dinner with the Pallavicinis in Budapest. The coming of the Bolsheviks had found her in Vienna, and now she was in despair at having left her husband and

three children in Budapest, fearing for their safety at the hands of the communist mob. Both her husband and herself were on the list of suspects during the Karolyi régime and now expected to be arrested if they did not hasten to make good their escape in the few days before the Bolsheviks could settle down and obtain a firm grip on all the exits from Hungary. Nevertheless, in spite of the entreaties of her friends, this plucky lady was determined to return to Budapest to rescue her family or to ascertain their fate. She asked me to assist her to make the journey. I told her I was likely to turn out a doubtful protector, as the Communists would probably have their eyes on me, on account of what I had written against them during the past month. I advised her to rely on Macartney, who was in no way compromised like myself. The latter, as gallant and courteous an Ulsterman as ever lived, was ever ready to help ladies in distress and to take them under his protection; in fact this became his chief occupation during the next two months. I suggested she should not make the journey herself, but should leave it to us to devise some means of getting her husband and family out of the country. Some Jews at the station, associated with her husband in business, offered to take her by a local train leaving for Southern Hungary. However, she declined their offer, on my advice not to leave the main route and thus appear, if arrested, to be creeping in by a back door.

We returned to the Hotel Bristol to await a local train which was reported to be leaving that evening at seven o'clock for Budapest. We, together with everyone else in Vienna, passed an agitated afternoon trying to discriminate between the truth and the false rumours circulating through the corridors like the waves from a wireless station. Amongst others I made a note at the time of the following: The whole of the suspected aristocracy had been locked up in prison at Bela Kuhn's orders, a general massacre of the upper classes had taken place, in which hundreds of well-known Hungarians had perished; heavy



fighting was taking place in the streets between the Communists and the supporters of the old régime; the principal streets in Budapest were now in flames; the inevitable massacre of the Jews following the time-honoured custom of centuries.

I must admit now that as these rumours followed one another with lightning rapidity, the enthusiasm of Macartney and myself began to waver, but nothing could shake the determination of the distracted Ella Dessewffy to return to Budapest.

The services of my secretary and interpreter, Isaac Goldman, now became invaluable. I had first employed him in Constanta for the purpose of sending despatches and cables to London during the wars of 1912 and 1913. Goldman is a Russian-born orthodox Jew, who served in the Russian Army during the War and deserted rather than join the Bolsheviks, at the fall of Czardom, and the coming of Kerenski. He can speak and write English perfectly; French almost as well; German as if it were his native tongue; Hungarian partly; Rumanian and Greek extremely well. Russian is his native tongue, Yiddish is also known to him, and in no matter what country I took him, within twenty-four hours he could always acquire enough of the language to see me through my difficulties. He told me his father had made his family speak a different language every day of the week, and to this fact he owed his mastery of so many. Goldman is a typical child of the semi-Orient, good at business, hard-working, and withal, extremely plucky in cases of emergency. His paramount advantage to me was not only his knowledge of languages and his general business ability, but his gift of being able to sound the under-world of the Middle-East by means of that mysterious freemasonry, mental or telepathic, which the Jews possess. There was not an event the coming of which he did not know in advance, hardly a public character high or low whose strength, weaknesses, or accessibility to bribes, etc., he had not discovered, and there was



not a political movement with which he was not in touch.

Long before seven p.m. the four of us—Macartney, Countess Dessewffy, Goldman and myself—were at the station to find the train already packed, with hundreds unable to find seats lying or reclining in the corridors. However, we managed to have some of the early arrivals ejected and to secure four places in one compartment by liberal bribes in foreign valuta to railway officials. The carriages were filthy, and a varied assortment of insects were our inseparable companions throughout the night. We settled ourselves down as comfortably as circumstances would permit, ate tinned food for dinner, comforted ourselves with a bottle of good wine, and tried to keep up our spirits by assuming a light-hearted levity we were all far from feeling. Our minds were always reverting to the one thought—what kind of a reception would we receive at the Hungarian frontier? A revolution gains enormous strength at the start from the fear it inspires. After what had happened in Russia, the names Communist, Bolshevik or Soviet have become synonymous with every form of cold-blooded murder and atrocity. Would we find the same state of affairs in Hungary as existed in Russia? Visions of the French Revolution arose involuntarily before our imagination—Danton, Marat, Robespierre, the dreaded Advocate General Fouquier-Tinville, Charras of Nantes—would we find their twentieth century prototypes awaiting us at the capital? The Egyptian obelisk in the Place de la Concorde faded from our minds and we saw in its place the sombre silhouette of the Guillotine, and, whenever one dozed, an endless procession of mournful figures seemed to be making their way towards that awful scaffold. Our nerves were in fact very much on edge.

At 11 p.m. we reached the Hungarian frontier at Bruck and our hearts beat heavily. The best we could hope for was a stern refusal to allow us to enter the country. I think we all began to wish this would happen so that we

could return to Vienna with our honour saved. An officer, accompanied by soldiers in ill-kempt uniforms, then passed down the corridors ordering everybody out of the train. Each soldier wore a large red armlet, the insignia of the new order of Peace on Earth and Goodwill towards Men. All protests were quite futile, for the Soviet and its servants are inexorable, brutal taskmasters, and somewhat summary in their methods. Those who were slow in leaving the train had their mentality quickened by a friendly prod with a bayonet or the butt-end of a rifle, and their luggage quickly followed them, thrown pell-mell out of the window by the willing hands of the Red Guards. However, I made no effort to move, and when the officer came round again he found me still sitting there. On hearing me address the faithful Goldman in English, he exclaimed: "Oh, you need not get out if you are English; you can stay here with your baggage." This was an excellent start and our spirits rose. I tried to obtain the same privilege for Ella Dessewffy, but the officer saw her Hungarian passport, was adamant in his refusal, and she was bundled out on the platform with her belongings. The examination of all these unfortunates took nearly three hours, and it was 2 a.m. before the train started to drag its way wearily towards Budapest. We passed a miserable night, dozing from time to time, only to be aroused by flea bites, or the sudden stoppage of the train at every wayside station.

*March 24th.* We approached the suburbs of Budapest towards 9 a.m. Ella Dessewffy decided it would be too risky for her to proceed as far as the main station, where she was so well-known, and descended at one of the suburbs to make the rest of the journey by tram. She promised to communicate with us as soon as she could find a safe means.

On our arrival the wild rumours current in Vienna were at once dissipated into thin air. Budapest was outwardly quite calm, and what surprised me most was its cleanliness when compared with my last visit. The station had

been swept clean and the streets cleared of snow and refuse. In fact it was difficult to believe that a revolution had taken place and that the dreaded Bolsheviks were in power. No one interfered with us at the station and we drove to the Ritz Hotel in a single-horse Victoria much the worse for wear, for all the decent-looking carriages had disappeared from the streets. The ever-agreeable manager of the Ritz, greeted us in the hall with the announcement that he could only let us have a single room, but promised to try and find others on the morrow. "You must understand," he added, "I am no longer my own master; the rooms are taken by anyone who claims to be a Bolshevik or Communist or supporter of the new régime." But we were quite content. Our reception up to date had been all one could wish, and a hot bath completely restored our confidence.

I had not been in the hotel half-an-hour when I was rung up by my old friend, Zerkovitch, who had been charged with the care of visitors under the Karolyi régime and with whom I had become acquainted on the occasion of my last visit. He assumed a very peremptory tone and ordered me to come and see him immediately. Zerkovitch deserves a paragraph to himself. He is typical of the "Vicar of Bray" type of opportunist, who comes to the front during revolutions and who loyally serves every administration of any shade of opinion as long as it remains in office, by simply changing the political sign outside the office door of his malleable conscience. Zerkovitch is a Jew who has passed most of his life in New York and he speaks English perfectly. A firm supporter of the Karolyi régime, he had never lost an opportunity three weeks before of denouncing the extremists who were dragging their country towards Moscow and red ruin. No one had been more emphatic when warning me of the rocks ahead and of the frightful catastrophe which would overwhelm society if Karolyi should fall and Bela Kuhn reign. Now, just three weeks later, I found him one of



the keenest supporters of the Soviet, installed in a comfortable suite of rooms at the Ritz and charged with the care and supervision of all foreigners in Budapest.

On my entry he assumed a very severe air and asked me how I dared return to Hungary after what I had written in the "Daily Telegraph" about the Communists. He told me that my articles had come back, had been translated at the Press Bureau, and had caused extreme pain to the sensitive consciences of Bela Kuhn and Co. He ended up by warning me, if I valued my life and liberty, to leave Budapest the same evening, and he undertook to secure me a seat on the train. But this did not suit my plans and I replied: "I take full responsibility for all I have written. I can quite well protect myself and I would have you remember—and this you can tell Bela Kuhn—that it is the Entente who has won the war, and not Bela Kuhn and the Soviets." This all-important fact was apt to be overlooked amidst this stormy sea of revolutions and domestic upheavals, and during my stay in Central Europe I had frequently to recall it to the memory of the various officials with whom one had to deal. The reminder was always timely and never lost on them.

Zerkovitch, a very good fellow at heart, although a political wind-jammer, at once saw the truth of my arguments and changed his attitude. He replied: "I will do my best to make things right for you. I will go and see Bela Kuhn, and I will endeavour to fix up an interview for you and Macartney." From this hour we remained very good friends. When the fall of the Bolsheviks took place five months later, Zerkovitch managed to escape the débâcle and to explain his position satisfactorily to the Horthy Government. I always admired this New York Jew. A kind of Talleyrand or Fouché on a small scale, and in a humble theatre, but how useful this type of man is, and how much more agreeable to deal with than the sea-green incorruptibles of the Robespierre school.

On returning to my room Goldman handed me a slip



of paper. On it was written these words: "Come and see me immediately on a matter of life and death—Ella Dessewffy." This message came at an awkward moment. I knew my movements were being watched by the hordes of spies hanging round the hotel, and a visit from me might compromise her and at the same time jeopardise my own position. I decided to consult Zerkovitch, on whom I felt sure I could now rely. On hearing my proposal he replied: "I must know nothing of this. For heaven's sake, don't mention their names. They are both on the list of suspects and may be arrested at any moment."

Accompanied by Goldman to show me the way, I set out by a very circuitous route, hoping to throw the spies off our track. I seized a favourable opportunity when no one was looking to enter the house alone. I found the unfortunate Countess with her husband and mother, all three of them much agitated. She said: "I sent for you because we must both fly to-night. We are on the list of suspects and we shall be arrested as soon as our presence is discovered. I am going to try and get through to Vienna by train, and my husband will make for the country, disguised as a peasant, and try and pass the frontier by an unfrequented and unguarded route. He will certainly be arrested if he attempts to take the train." Poor Ella Dessewffy was in despair, because she had come to Budapest to take away her children who had been hidden in a house in the suburbs, the residence of an old servant, and were being looked after by her. She wished to stay another day to see them, but I strongly urged her to abandon this idea and to leave without a moment's delay. Finally she agreed, after I had promised to look after her children myself and to send them to Vienna as soon as possible. I then said good-bye, as my presence in the house was compromising to us all. Just as I was leaving, she handed me all her jewellery and eighty thousand crowns in notes, and for the first time during the Bolshevist régime, I found myself in possession of a valuable jewellery collection. The

experience subsequently became so common that I thought nothing of putting half a million francs' worth of precious stones into my pockets at a moment's notice.

At 4.30 p.m. a Soviet car called at the Hotel Ritz, and the faithful Zerkovitch announced to Macartney and myself that he was charged to convey us to the Supreme Soviet Council then in permanent session at the Hapsburg Palace. I must confess I felt an uncomfortable feeling down my spine that we might spend the night in prison, but Macartney, not having been previously compromised, was more at his ease. On our journey across the Danube and up the hill to Buda, I noticed that only the dregs of the population were abroad, strolling about in the amplitude of their newly-acquired liberty, anticipating a millennium of workless days devoted to good living and abstract political discussions, waiting for something—they knew not what—which they believed would drop, not from the skies, but from the Hapsburg Palace perched on the hill of Buda, where the elect of Moscow were now installed.

The Soviet Council held its sessions in the old Foreign Office. Round the Council-house a slovenly Red Guard was on duty, and surrounding the Red Guard was a still more villainous-looking collection of youths, roughs and ne'er-do-wells. We were conducted upstairs to the "anti-chambre" of the Supreme Council, which was packed with supporters of the new Government—journalists come to sell their services, political placemen looking for jobs, would-be contractors and local organizers of the Soviets' armed forces in the country. The majority seemed to be of Semitic origin. Never before had I been brought into touch with such a criminal looking gang. They would have done credit to any police gazette, and were arrayed in every sort of costume from frock coats—looted during the revolution—and old uniforms down to workmen's corduroy breeches and collarless shirts. From the whole arose a disagreeable aroma of dirt and sweat, the only scent recognized officially under a Bolshevik régime.

From time to time the door of the Council Chamber opened and one of the people's Commissaries would appear to consult with some placeman or supporter in the anti-chambre. Macartney and myself stationed ourselves near the door, so as to get a good look inside during the few seconds elapsing between the opening and shutting. The interior disclosed a gilded Council Chamber, a huge, oblong table covered with papers and inkstands, and the choicest collection of evil-looking countenances lolling, in every conceivable attitude around it. Some were smoking brown paper cigars, some cheap cigarettes, and others long churchwarden clay pipes. Amongst this galaxy of beauty, the ugly Mongolian countenance of Bela Kuhn fixed the attention at once. One old fellow, the most human-looking of the lot, a simple Hungarian peasant, came out clad in corduroy breeches, a red shirt devoid of collar, and huge boots, such as all Hungarian peasants wear on festive occasions, caked with the mud of his native soil, which he was now preparing to divide gratis amongst his countrymen. His knotted, dirty mane had certainly seldom known soap or comb or brush. We were informed he was the newly-appointed people's Commissary for agriculture.

The smiling, cynical, intellectual Professor Kunfi, whom I had met on my previous visit, appeared looking just as sly and sleek as ever. I asked him several pointed questions, one being: "Would the Soviet Government object to a military occupation of Budapest?" Kunfi assured me they would not, but when I tackled him on the delicate subject of the finances of Hungary, he shut up like a clam. Little Böehm, ex-Minister of War under Karolyi, then entered. He has now given up the War Office and has been appointed "Minister for the Propaganda of Bolshevism." He looked ill and uncomfortable, apparently not being in love with his new job. He said to me: "Did I not tell you what would happen when you were last here, if the Entente refused to recognise us? Now you see we have a Soviet Government." Pogany, who had taken



Böehm's place as Minister of War, also came in, but he eyed me coldly and pretended not to know me.

A little later Bela Kuhn, the Foreign Minister and the leading spirit of the Soviet, entered. We were presented by Zerkovitch, and greeted with considerable cordiality by Bela Kuhn, who can make himself quite agreeable when he chooses, and possesses the saving grace of enjoying a considerable sense of humour. He is an Austrian Jew by birth, but he must have Mongolian blood from the cast of his countenance. He served during the war in a cavalry regiment commanded by Count Gaza Andrassy. The latter subsequently told me he had been badly treated in the regiment by everyone except himself, and, in consequence of certain small acts of kindness, Kuhn never forgot Gaza Andrassy when he became all-powerful in the land. Later in the war Kuhn either deserted or was captured by the Russians, and was taken to Moscow, where he became an ardent Bolshevik and subsequently Lenin's secretary. He is said to have led the attack and capture of the Moscow Post Office during one of the counter-revolutionary émeutes in the capital.

Bela Kuhn is a very ugly, bald-headed man, thirty years of age in 1919, of medium height and strongly built. His head is mis-shaped, and his nose and mouth seem to have side-slipped. But alongside of his secretary—who possesses the most criminal face I ever saw—he appeared to considerable advantage. After being introduced, Macartney and I—as previously agreed—put to him a series of searching questions through the intermediary of Zerkovitch. But the conversation was highly unsatisfactory and made little progress, for it was obvious that Zerkovitch—himself under suspicion because of his former ardent republicanism under Karolyi—was terribly frightened at being obliged to beard the Lion in his den—the Bela in his Hall—and was not interpreting correctly. This was subsequently confirmed by the faithful Goldman, who was eavesdropping. Bela Kuhn also seemed embarrassed at



having to answer questions in a room full of people, all of whom were trying to hear what passed. He was very agreeable and polite but obviously wished for time to consider his answers. Finally, to escape from the impasse, he suggested that we should put our principal points on paper, and he promised to send written replies for transmission to England. We returned to the hotel, drew up our points as agreed, and despatched them to the Palace before dinner.

This evening we had our first taste of a meal under Bolshevism. The waiters, whether they liked it or not, had been obliged to form a Soviet and to abide by its rules and regulations. The food was bad and scarce and those who by their rough exterior and dirt could be sized up as true Bolsheviks were served first, and the well-dressed, who were looked upon as belonging to the opposition camp, last.

*March 25th.* Budapest is outwardly calm, but is full of the most extravagant rumours. The position of the Foreign Missions would be ludicrous were it not so undignified. The outbreak of Bolshevism has taken Paris completely by surprise, and has created an entirely new situation, with which no one on the spot is qualified to deal. The head of the French Mission and of all the Foreign Missions, Colonel Vix, is nominally free, but in reality is little better than a prisoner in his own house, which is surrounded by Red Guards, placed there ostensibly for the purpose of protecting the Mission, in reality to spy on it. These Red Guards do exactly what they like and even invade the Colonel's bedroom. They insult everyone who comes to see him and behave in the most insolent and aggressive manner. To-day they waylaid a French officer in the street and took away his epaulettes and stars. All badges of rank have now disappeared from the Hungarian officers, most of whom have been obliged to fly from the capital, or to lie low. Their places in the army have been taken by soldiers elected by

their comrades, or chosen by the Soviet Councils. The French squadron of Algerian Spahis (Native Algerian Cavalry acting as Vix's escort), who were camped outside the town, managed to get away to the Yugo-Slav frontier, after refusing the gratuitous offer to embrace Bolshevism and take service under the Soviet. Vix's personal escort in Budapest have been made prisoners and disarmed. Was there ever such a musical-comedy situation! Here are the victors in the World War being arrested by the vanquished, acting under orders from Moscow, and kept in semi-captivity whilst their escorts are made prisoners of war. The two British representatives, Captain Pommerell and Major Peters, live at the Ritz Hotel and are unmolested, but closely watched. Pommerell is a very fine fellow, and stands no nonsense from them. On the night of the proclamation of the Soviet, he returned late to the hotel, to find his passage barred by a gang of Red Guards with fixed bayonets, who refused to allow him to enter. Now Pommerell is a very tall man and towered above the Reds. Walking up to the line of fixed bayonets, he ran his finger along the tops exclaiming: "Your bayonets are not sharp enough to hurt a British officer," and then, firmly pushing them aside, he entered the hotel.

The Missions have requested permission to leave, but the Soviet Government is trying to induce them to stay, as their departure would be tantamount to breaking off relations with the Entente, and the leaders wish to avoid this, in case they should damage their position in the eyes of their followers, who fear a fresh outbreak of hostilities. However, to-day the combined Missions sent an ultimatum to the Government, and it is reported they will be allowed to leave to-morrow for the Yugo-Slav frontier.

*March 26th.* The great act in the comedy to-day has been the departure of Colonel Vix and the members of the unfortunate Entente Missions, all of whom have left Budapest, with the exception of Professor Brown, the official onlooker on behalf of President Wilson, and Lieutenant-

Commander Williams-Freeman, a naval officer who, in the absence of any instructions to the contrary, is staying on of his own accord to look after British subjects left in the town, and I am inclined to think from sheer love of sport. Macartney and I have been advised to leave, but we have decided to remain under Bela Kuhn's rule until he puts us in prison, converts us to Bolshevism, or turns us out.

The departure of the Missions was carefully organized so as to inflict every conceivable insult and discomfort upon them. On arriving at the station, the representatives of the victorious Entente were informed they would have to walk a mile and a half down the line to a siding, where a train, made up of filthy old second and third-class carriages was waiting for them. There was not even a saloon for the officers of superior rank! Horse-boxes were attached for the escort of Spahis, who had been given permission to take their horses with them. Several English and French residents living in Budapest, fearing massacre and pillage in the future, were also given places on the train. It was a melancholy spectacle—this enforced departure of the victors from one of the conquered countries, under the auspices of Lenin's agents and the nominal protection of a fierce-looking gang of Red Guards, who occupied the front compartments. One by one the conquerors arrived—Vix, Baker, Peters, Pommerell, followed by Italians, Yugo-Slavs and Czechs, all in uniforms covered with the decorations of a dozen victorious nations. A junior lieutenant of the Red Army was apparently in charge of the train, for no member of the Soviet Government turned up to do the last honours and to speed the victors on their way. After waiting for one hour and a half, and there being no signs of an engine, the junior lieutenant informed Colonel Vix that it would be impossible for the train to start till eight o'clock that night, so, breathing curses and threatening vengeance on the Reds, the members of the Missions once more returned to their hotels. It was after nine p.m. when the train steamed



out of Budapest for Yugo-Slavia bearing the victors in the Great War "to make the world safe for Democracy."

*March 27th.* I awoke this morning to find the old world crumbling to pieces. It is a most curious sensation suddenly to realize that in the course of the night all the old social institutions have been swept away, and a new edifice, based on the doctrines of Lenin and Trotski, erected in their place. All the experiences of two thousand years of evolution have been ruthlessly discarded and in their place a jerry-built structure of new laws and new customs has sprung up, hastily erected during the night, leaving the people in a state of bewilderment. The Soviet Council continues its sessions through day and night and on into the early hours of the morning, destroying one by one all the safeguards built up in the course of ages for the protection of the private citizen, his home, his wife, his family, his religion and his property. I met the hall-porter with a smile on his face, which had dispelled the gloom of the last three or four days.

"What has happened," I asked, "to make you so pleased with life this morning?"

"Have you not seen the new law about marriage?" he answered. I confessed that I was waiting for someone to translate the papers to me.

"Well, you will see by these that if a man leaves his wife for one year, or a wife leaves her husband for one year, at the end of that time they become automatically divorced, and neither can claim to go back to the other."

The right of ownership of property has also been swept away, and no one is allowed more than a certain specified number of rooms in their house or apartment; the remainder are to be filled by the "Comrades"—as all the good citizens are now called—who can come and live in one's best drawing-room, dining-room, or bed-room, free of charge, and enjoy equal rights with the legitimate owner in the use of the bath, kitchen, and other household offices.

There has been a tremendous exodus from the poorer



districts of Budapest to what we should call in London the "West End," and the dregs of the population, men, women and children, with their household effects, are moving into the splendid houses, apartments and palaces of the aristocracy, like a muddy river which has overflowed its banks. They take possession as they wish, stealing the rugs and pictures, breaking up the furniture, destroying the polished floors and Persian carpets with their hob-nailed boots, and using the baths for any purpose rather than the natural one for which they were designed. Ladies of gentle birth, who have remained in the capital, find themselves living in intimate association with workingmen, ne'er-do-wells, and all the riff-raff and scum of the city. It is no use protesting, because unless the legitimate owners accept the situation, they are liable to find themselves thrown into the streets or cast into gaol. The submerged tenth are living in a fairy palace of luxury and comfort, but as it can only lead to a complete breakdown of the country's economic system, and probably the failure of the food supply, there is likely to be a revulsion of feeling before many days are past.

The Soviet Council has now limited the authority of parents over their children. The children are allowed to form a Soviet of their own, and in a question of domestic discipline, the parent may not punish his child in the customary manner, or any other way, until the child has brought his case before his infantile Soviet. The other children then decide whether his offence merits the application of the paternal slipper on that spot hallowed by the custom of ages. The same law applies to the schools. The old system of education has been abolished in the night and a new one, embodying the doctrines and blessings of Bolshevism, substituted in its place.

The effect on the hotels is very marked. The smart crowds who formerly frequented the Ritz and the Hungaria for lunch, dinner and tea are seen no longer. Their place is taken by gangs of "Comrades," mostly lesser Jews, the

majority of whom have never been inside a hotel before, except as carpet-sweepers or scullions. The squalor everywhere is indescribable and the hotel servants, who have been ordered to form a Soviet, are now quite unmanageable. The majority are anti-Bolshevists, but they dare not show one any civility, except in the privacy of one's own room, where the old waiters, recalling the glories and fat tips of the past, complain bitterly of the prevailing chaos and the horror of having to serve their new clientèle.

The Government has inaugurated a new system of running hotels. Sixty per cent. of the profits are to be handed over to the Soviet and thirty per cent. are to be distributed amongst the waiters; the remaining ten per cent., it is said, is to be divided up amongst the shareholders, although it is extremely doubtful that they will receive anything. Every evening at 9 p.m. there is a general exodus of all the waiters from the dining-room, whether one has finished one's dinner or not, to the Manager's Office, where the day's takings are divided into three portions of sixty, thirty, and ten per cent. The waiters' thirty per cent. is then divided up and each man considers he has finished his work for the day.

But few of the upper and middle classes are to be seen any longer in the streets; those who have not fled remain shut up in their houses for fear of being arrested or insulted, and despatch their servants to buy the necessities of life. Every hour of the day there are rumours of disorders in different parts of the town, and usually it is the Jews who suffer most, for the Kis Zsido (little Jews) seem to be just as infuriated against the Nagy Zsido (rich Jews) as they are against the pure Magyar stock. The mob, being out of hand, shows its old hatred of the Jews, in spite of the fact that it acknowledges their rule.

The city is now threatened with a famine, owing to the refusal of the peasants to sell their stocks and stringent food regulations are coming into force. All citizens, high and low, rich and poor, are to eat alike or have their diets

reversed, as there are to be three categories of rations which are to be served out according to one's fidelity to communist doctrines.

The hotel corridors swarm with spies and it is impossible to go anywhere or to express an opinion in public without its being known and reported to Headquarters. Such is the terror that prevails that no one is now sure whether he is talking to a friend or a spy—and the slightest criticism of the new Government overheard in a casual conversation may lead to the arrest and sudden disappearance of the delinquent. The old police force of Budapest has been taken over by the Soviet, many of the chiefs are in prison, and new heads of departments have been put in their places. These are chosen from amongst the most rabid Bolsheviks, and are charged to maintain order in the town. There is an Extraordinary Tribunal and Counter Espionage service to suppress any movement against the new Government. Special agents from the Communist organizations are charged with this service, and the old Police Force is chiefly employed in maintaining order and regulating traffic in the streets. The Government has been obliged to recall a number of the Staff officers of the old army for administrative purposes, and these unfortunates are obliged to work whether they like it or not, as they have been informed that their families will be held as hostages for their good conduct. The battalions of Red Guards who rule—or rather terrorize—the Capital, are allowed to choose their own officers from the ranks. The Soviet has decided that ex-officers will not be employed for service in the streets, or against prospective enemies in the field, but only in administrative offices, where their training and experience are essential.

So far, Macartney and myself have not been molested and we are allowed to go about freely. It is extremely difficult to obtain a meal in the hotel because of the shortage of food and the fact that one has to wait one's turn, as no waiter dares to show us any preference, for fear

of compromising his own position. Very often at lunch there is nothing to be had but a thick soup made of beans, and some vegetables; milk and butter have entirely disappeared; white bread has not been seen for a long time and the quality of the brown is extremely bad. One takes one's place at table amongst the gangs of "Comrades," many of whom hardly know the use of a knife and fork, and as there is a law that every person in the hotel must eat alike, you need waste no time in trying to order a meal "à la carte." One just sits until one's plate of soup, beans or potatoes is hurled at one by a passing waiter, and then one clears out to seek fresh air as soon as possible.

The Soviet Government has prohibited the sale of any intoxicants in Budapest, because they fear the "Comrades" will get out of hand if they have free access to the wine cellars of the hotels and private houses. With commendable tact they have made an exception to this very stringent law, namely, that foreigners remaining in the capital may be allowed to have what they want. All others get five years' imprisonment and a fine of 50,000 crowns. Thus Macartney, Freeman and I at least have the satisfaction of being able to drink the thin wine of the country in the place of water. There is little or nothing else, for all the stocks of coffee and tea have already been consumed, and no fresh supplies are coming in. Professor Brown, the American representative, fortunately has a fair supply of tinned meat and preserved food which he kindly shares with us, and Freeman also possesses a small reserve; otherwise we would almost be starving.



## CHAPTER V

### LIFE IN BUDAPEST

*March 29th.* I decided to send Goldman back to Vienna to-day with despatches from Macartney and myself, as we have no proofs that our cables sent from Budapest ever reach their destination. Also I was anxious to find out if the Countess Dessewffy had arrived at Vienna safely, as I had had no word from her since her flight from the capital.

This morning at 10 o'clock, I was told by the floor waiter that a mysterious visitor, who refused to give his name, wished to see me. A fine, courtly, old gentleman was shown into my room and introduced himself as Count Dessewffy, the grandfather of the children. He is one of the few who have remained in Budapest, on account of the age and illness of his wife. Up to the present he has not been molested, and has been allowed to remain in his house, but he has been confined to two rooms, and the remainder have been taken over by the great unwashed! Count Dessewffy was greatly agitated, owing to my failure to find a means of sending the children to Vienna. I told him that everything possible was being done, and that I hoped to arrange a plan within the next two or three days, and asked him to send the children to see me as I wished to explain to them exactly what they would have to do.

In the afternoon the three, aged 15, 12 and 7, came to the hotel, but at 4 p.m. Goldman came to tell me he would not be able to take the children with him to-night, as they have no passports and no visas. He thinks, however, he

has arranged a new plan of escape. In a few days a German train will leave for Vienna, taking away all the German subjects in Budapest, and the German Ambassador has promised him to provide three passports for the children under an assumed name. We therefore agreed to this plan and I packed my three young visitors back to their hiding-place once again.

In the afternoon I had a long talk with Professor Brown, the American representative—a typical Wilsonian, half schoolmaster, half ideologue, and totally out of touch with European conditions. Unfortunately he believes everything told him by the Soviet leaders, and therefore sends very erroneous reports to the Supreme Council in Paris. He assures me the position is much better than it has been for several days, that the Soviet Government is now firmly in the saddle, and is in a position to preserve order and to protect the lives and property of all. He regards the revolution as a genuine social democratic development, following as a natural corollary on the bad government and ill-treatment of the working-class in Hungary for a thousand years past. The Professor is a most trusting man and has the most implicit faith in the integrity and single-mindedness of purpose of the Bolshevist leaders. He regards them as fitting trustees of a new era of democracy which is to bring a golden future of happiness and prosperity to Hungary and her neighbours in Central Europe.

Such disquieting incidents as putting hundreds of people in prison without a trial; stealing pictures, jewels and money; seizing private property without compensation; abolishing freedom of the Press, and the summary execution of anyone suspected of being a counter-revolutionist, are quite lost on the dear old Professor, who, regarding the situation with a dispassionate, academic eye, looks upon these matters as temporary inconveniences which will quickly disappear in a blaze of world freedom and democracy, with American institutions as their model.

And this is the type of man who is advising the Conference in Paris! No wonder such blunders are made and such strange, ill-considered decisions arrived at. But we like the Professor in spite of his strange views, and we love to argue with him on Bolshevism and freedom, or rather, on the difference between the two.

I then asked him if he had heard the latest extraordinary news from the Yugo-Slav frontier, where five hundred French troops and eighteen armoured cars have been waylaid in a train, covered with machine guns by the Red Troops and forced to surrender. The Professor had heard nothing about this incident, was amazed and refused to believe in the truth of the report, although I assured him that the five hundred French infantry were now interned in the barracks of the town. Freeman had given me the information only three hours before. The Professor was visibly annoyed that the British representative had obtained information on so important a matter when he himself had heard nothing. He expressed a desire for a closer co-operation between the two Missions—if Missions they can now be called! But the English and American standpoints are too far apart for this plan to work, for the Professor considers it his duty to preserve the strictest diplomatic etiquette towards the Soviet; whereas the honest, blunt, fearless, outspoken British sailor, Freeman, knowing them all to be blackguards, capable of any crime, is determined to deal with them as such, and to employ the same weapons which the Soviet Government itself delights to use. For instance, the Professor refuses to help anyone to leave Budapest. He will not even allow letters to be carried to Vienna by the American courier, who leaves three nights a week, although hundreds of refugees in Vienna are anxiously awaiting news of their numerous friends and relatives.

Freeman, on the other hand, turned his rooms at the Ritz Hotel into a veritable Bureau of Refuge for distressed ladies, hunted aristocrats and stricken parents seeking

their children. At all hours of the day or night, a crowd of pale-faced terrified women wait round his door, some wishing to escape from the country; others to send out letters and jewellery; others begging him to use his good influence on their behalf with Bela Kuhn and Co. Freeman works like a slave and never turns a deaf ear to an appeal, however difficult of accomplishment.

Macartney and I co-operate with him, and the amount of letters, women, children, jewellery and many other things we manage to smuggle out of the country in these early days will never accurately be known. We handle anything, from bank-notes to a millionaire's baby. Poor Freeman was not always treated with the gratitude his conduct deserved. One night there was a mild attempt at a counter-revolution, and the band at the hotel, hearing that the Soviet Government had fallen, prematurely started to play Royalist airs, while some of the diners rose in their seats to cheer the news. A few minutes later, a whole gang of Red Guards rushed into the hotel, threatening vengeance on all who had taken part in the demonstration. The diners, including the chef d'orchestre and the band, fled to Freeman's room for protection. Freeman was literally snowed under by refugees. He decided that the best plan would be for him to go personally to Bela Kuhn and ask for clemency for the erring ones. He locked the whole lot into his room and sallied forth on his mission of mercy, without even waiting for dinner. Food at this time was very scarce in Budapest, and the Commander had stocked his room with provisions—a ham, tinned meats, and whisky which had been sent up by the War Mission from Belgrade. The temptation proved too great for the guilty Counter-Revolutionists expecting immediate execution. One generally reads in the "News of the World" that the criminal about to be hanged ate a hearty breakfast and did not refuse the customary glass of sherry offered him by the kind-hearted Under-Sheriff. And in like manner, the fifty odd Counter-Revolutionists proved



no exception to the general rule of having a hearty appetite when faced with death, and taking as their motto "Let us eat and drink for to-morrow we die," they fell upon Freeman's slender stock of provisions during his absence and literally devoured the lot, including every drop of whisky. At 10.30 when the gallant Commander returned with a free pardon for all, having found Bela Kuhn in a good humour, there was not so much as a biscuit left, nor a drop of whisky in the bottle, and the only reminder of his misplaced kindness was one lonely ham-bone stripped of every particle of flesh. The Commander swore he would allow the next lot of Counter-Revolutionists to perish on the scaffold.

*Sunday, March 30th.* This morning I had an appointment to see Pogany, the People's Commissary for War, up at the Castle. Goldman having left for Vienna, I was without an interpreter and secretary, so Istavan Barcy, who had arranged the interview, undertook to accompany me. Barcy is an old official of the Foreign Office and a very good fellow who has not run away, like so many others, from Budapest, but has stayed behind to bluff it out. He was formerly a Court official, was educated in England, loves the country, has many English friends and speaks the language like a native. Being one of the very few officials left who understands the procedure of the Foreign Office, the Bolsheviks are only too glad to make use of his services for the time being.

Amongst my other friends in Budapest at this time was a youth called George Edward Zichy, the son of Count Zichy, whose mother was a Miss Williams of Philadelphia. young Zichy had not left the capital because he was greatly enamoured of a little actress, and he went about the streets like a fish out of water in the Bolshevik sea of mud, assuming a haughty attitude in his dealings with them and arousing the fury of the Jew boys. But now things had become too hot for him, his funds were running short and he was anxious to escape. When he heard I was going

to visit Pogany, he said he would accompany me as he wished to try and make friends with some of the Bolshevik leaders, in the hope that they would give him a passport to enable him to leave the country and rejoin his relatives in America. So the three of us set out for the Castle. On the way up, Barcy related to me the following story:—

In 1917 the young Emperor Karl, fully realizing the desperate position of his tottering throne and being bent on making a separate peace, determined to approach the Emperor William and force his acquiescence. At this time Maurice Esterhazy was the Prime Minister, and Barcy was detailed to accompany them on their difficult mission. The All-Highest received them in a tent. The three, trembling at their own temerity, approached the Imperial Headquarters and waited outside.

Karl said to Esterhazy, "You go in first, Maurice, and tell him what we have come about."

Esterhazy replied: "No, Your Majesty must enter first." So the unwilling Karl was pushed through the half-open fly of the Imperial tent.

The listeners outside heard a guttural greeting, then the gentle tones of the young Emperor stating his case to the All-Highest. Then there followed an angry roar. It was the Emperor's voice. He replied: "A peace at this juncture is impossible. My troops are everywhere invincible. We have only to hold out a little longer and the Entente will be obliged to give in. My new storm troops are wonderful."

A few seconds later King Karl made his exit, carrying something dark in his right hand.

"Look what I have got!" he exclaimed, and produced not the longed-for peace, but an Iron Cross.

It was now the gentle Esterhazy's turn. He was pushed unwillingly through the entrance and the listeners heard the plaintive voice of the Prime Minister reiterating the necessity for an immediate peace. But he did not get very far. There followed yet another angry roar from the

Imperial throat, and a second later Esterhazy emerged, holding something black in his right hand.

"Look!" he exclaimed, "I have got one too," and produced the Iron Cross. The three now prepared to leave, when suddenly a fat General emerged from the tent. "Hi! Comrade!" he shouted to Barcy, "Have you got one?" Before the latter could reply, the General put his hand into his trouser pocket and pulled out the Iron Cross of the Third Class which he handed to Barcy. Thus ended the Peace Mission.

On arriving at the War Office, we entered the ante-room, which was filled with the same villainous-looking crowd of hangers-on one sees in all the ante-rooms. I was at once accosted by a journalist, who had been a supporter of the Karolyi régime. He had now developed into a full-fledged Bolshevik, and had been appointed the editor of a soldiers' paper used for propaganda. He came up and asked me in a sneering manner if I had not written things unfavourable to the Bolsheviks. I replied that I was a bitter enemy of the movement and did not attempt to conceal the fact from anyone who cared to know it. This answer annoyed him very much, and he sent word in to Pogany to say I had brought a certain young Count Zichy to act as interpreter. Shortly afterwards an A.D.C. came out and politely informed Zichy that his presence would not be required as Pogany spoke perfect French. This was a lie, as Pogany does not speak a word of French or English. The object of this manoeuvre was to enable the journalist to act as my interpreter.

As we had a long time to wait, he thought he would improve his time by giving me a long lecture on the principles and theory of Bolshevism. He produced the usual absurd and illogical arguments in its favour. I asked him: "Why do you not embrace all classes in your social reform movement, including the bourgeoisie and nobility, and thus develop it on constitutional lines, instead of in a manner that has already plunged Russia into financial

ruin, and must inevitably have the same result in Hungary?" X. replied: "Our object is to destroy the bourgeoisie and upper classes. We will have nothing to do with them. Only the working-men are to count and have a say in affairs of State. The basic principle of Bolshevism is that no one, either in public or in private life, shall have a higher salary than the poorest paid labourer, no matter what his employment may be. Those who refuse to join the new movement are to be starved into submission, as they have been in Russia. Everyone is to be enrolled into some employment. There will be three categories, according to the kind of labour undertaken, and there will be three different diets, a No. 1, No. 2, and No. 3. Then we shall all have just enough money and enough food to lead lives of equality and the world will become an ideal one."

I pointed out some of the financial difficulties in the way of such a scheme, and how it would be impossible for Hungary to trade with other countries if her credit was still further debased. X. replied: "Oh, we have plenty of foreign money with which to make purchases abroad." Bolshevists thrive on economic illusions! We then discussed the question of the army. X. said: "None of the old officers are eligible for service in the Red Guard, although some will be kept for administrative purposes in the War Ministry. In the new army which was created by Böehm under the Karolyi administration, there are still some of the old officers serving, but they will be gradually eliminated."

I replied: "How are you going to get an army to manoeuvre or fight without trained officers? That is an experiment that has never succeeded yet."

He replied: "Yes, it has succeeded in Russia where they now have an excellent army of one million and a half."

I pointed out that in Russia they had been obliged to take back the old officers.



X. went on: "The battalions select suitable soldiers to command them, and they will make just as good officers as the others have done."

I told him he was living in a fool's paradise, but of course it is impossible to argue with anyone who has been inoculated with the Bolshevist germ.

A quarter-of-an-hour later, to the sound of the *Marseillaise*, a body of three hundred men of the First International Regiment of Red Guards, having in its ranks Hungarians, Russians, and Roumanians, appeared round the corner, marching in fours. In this simple formation they moved all right, but when they came to the square in front of the War Office, they were quite unable to manœuvre so as to front form. X. was nonplussed when I pointed out this ocular proof of the inaptitude of troops under the Soviet, and could only reply: "Give them time. Give them time."

At this crisis, when the whole mass was in a disorganized circle, one of their leaders, armed with a big stick—an ex-officer who had embraced Bolshevism—dashed to the front and seizing the leading files in his outstretched arms, pushed them in position facing the balcony and double windows of the central portico of the War Office. The band took up its position and played the "*Internationale*." The regiment was completely surrounded by a huge crowd of the lowest roughs of the town. Pogany then came from his inner sanctum, passing within a foot of me and cutting me dead. Going out on to the balcony he addressed the men in a very loud voice which could be heard all over the square. When he had finished, the Red Guards responded with three loud cheers. I saw from Pogany's attitude towards me my chance of an interview vanishing into thin air.

Then a little, dark cadaverous, pale-faced Jew with an evil countenance and flashing eyes stepped to the front and addressed the troops. Someone whispered in my ear "That is Szamuely." This was the first time I had seen

this famous agitator, who enjoyed the reputation of being the most bloodthirsty of all the Bolshevist leaders. It was Szamuely who promised his communist followers three days of massacre and pillage in order "to frighten the bourgeoisie and give them a good lesson." Up to date, his more moderate colleagues have prevented this sinister design from being carried into effect, but the threat hangs over the city and terrifies the moderate elements. Szamuely is an example of one of the very worst types who are thrown to the surface by these great social convulsions. He possesses no ideals behind his fanaticism and has no principles of any sort. He is merely a destroyer, the enemy of all constituted authority in any form. All he cares for is to exercise a bullying authority over his weaker neighbours. He longs for bloodshed and plunder. Of his career and well-merited end, I shall have more to say later on. He delivered his address in a thin, squeaky voice, and his reception from the dregs of the population was enthusiastic. Szamuely addressed his audience in Russian. His place was then taken by a young Rumanian Jewish officer, who had deserted from the Rumanian Army and embraced Bolshevism. When the speeches were finished, the band again played the "Internationale" and the troops marched away. They were a fair-looking lot, composed mostly of old soldiers who had served in the War, but they seemed dazed, as if hardly understanding the meaning of these proceedings. They all carried rifles and cartridge belts, but otherwise were without equipment. Their uniforms were a strange mixture of odds and ends.

Pogany returned to his room without taking the least notice of me and I saw it would be useless to attempt the interview. I was only too pleased to find myself in the fresh air again, and to get away from this revolting crowd of young Jews of the lowest stamp. How strange are the elements which revolutions place in supreme authority over their fellow men!

In the afternoon young Zichy called to take me to see

a musical comedy in a communist theatre. We could only obtain seats from the Government, which has taken over the control of the theatres, reserving all the good places for the dregs of the population, but they allowed us to have a box for ourselves. I found the boxes, the stalls, the pit and the gallery packed with "Comrades," their wives and families. The play was amusing and the music excellent, but the smell defies description. Never before, excepting the awful odour produced by dead donkeys on a battlefield, have I known anything quite so disagreeable as this aroma from eight hundred thoroughly filthy people, packed into a small compass with insufficient ventilation. A miasma of fetid perspiration arose from every part of the house, so that the air seemed charged with a thin mist. After one act I could stand it no longer, and returned to the Ritz to a miserable meal of some cabbage soup and black bread. Nothing else, the waiter told me, was available. But I presently discovered some favoured "Comrades" getting a little meat, and one table even had a chicken. However, when I asked for the same luxuries, they assured me they were non-existent. In fact, only those whose Communism is above suspicion can obtain anything fit to eat. I, being very much under suspicion, can hardly even get a waiter to serve me. I determined, therefore, to give them all a good lesson. After waiting for some time, I arose from my seat and went down into the kitchen where I found the chefs cooking various delicacies for the favoured ones. I seized an omelette and a huge mutton chop with potatoes from the tray of an astonished waiter, and returned in triumph to the dining-room, bearing my spoils, and followed by a screaming crowd of waiters. Placing the dishes in front of me, I commenced to eat my dinner and dared any one of them to try and take it away. This settled the matter.

At dinner, it was suddenly announced that everyone would be obliged to leave the hotel on the following day as the Government had decided to take over the building.

This rumour caused great consternation and was followed by a general rush of all the inmates to find accommodation elsewhere. I consulted Freeman and Professor Browne, who declared that they had no intention of leaving. After dinner we all assembled in the Professor's room to hold a conference. We accused poor Browne, not only of being at heart a Bolshevik, but also of deceiving his Government by allowing himself to be so freely taken in by the stories told him by the Bolshevik leaders of their actions and intentions. This made the poor Professor highly indignant, he tried to defend himself and denied the truth of these allegations.

There are persistent rumours about the town that very serious outbreaks may occur at any hour, and everyone is extremely nervous. The "Comrades" claim that the Government offered them three days of pillage, and they are now looking to the Government to fulfil this promise.

*March 31st.* Freeman, Macartney and myself went down the Andrassy Barracks to see a most curious sight, an example of the dramatic changes of fortune which revolutions bring about. Interned in the barracks are the five hundred men of the French Colonial Infantry, who were captured on the frontier of Yugo-Slavia a few days before. The Soviet Government, under threats from the Entente, has promised they shall be released to-day. The Commandant told me they had been fairly well treated by the Red Guards, but the officers had been relieved of their pistols and the men disarmed. Who would ever have expected to live to see a battalion of Entente troops made prisoners and interned by the Bolsheviks, within two months of the signing of the Armistice? Verily, we live in strange times! During the four days they have been confined in the Andrassy Barracks, the Soviet agitators have carried on a vigorous propaganda amongst the French Colonial Infantry, hoping to induce them to desert their colours. The French Colonel, being quite sure of his men, allows the Bolshevik orators to address his



troops in the barrack square. After four days' strenuous campaign, not a single French soldier has adopted the sacred cause of liberty, as interpreted by Bela Kuhn, Pogany, Szamuely and Co. On this occasion, the Soviet fulfilled its promises and the French battalion was despatched to the Yugo-Slav frontier in the evening!

Budapest has some famous mud baths, which are excellent for rheumatism and kindred complaints. As hot water is quite unobtainable in a hotel under the Bolshevist régime, we pay frequent visits to these. The old head of this Thermanal is in despair at the turn of events in this country. The baths, like everything else, have now been communized and the lowest of the "Comrades" can now use them at any time they like, free of charge. The public baths are therefore quite unfit for use, but you can still engage a private one. The only useful measure passed by the Soviet during its reign in Hungary was in connection with these baths. A decree was issued that twice a week they would be closed to the public and placed at the disposal of the poor school children. As far as I know, however, they were never used for this purpose, either because the organization broke down, or the children or their parents objected to this compulsory immersion.

The food question became serious to-day. It was impossible to obtain any meat, potatoes, eggs, or chickens in the principal hotels and restaurants. Young Zichy told me, however, he knew of a café at the extreme end of the Andrassy Utca where, for a consideration, one could obtain some meat. So we hired a tumble-down carriage and went there to dine.

Troubles have been freely announced for this evening. It is rumoured that Szamuely's promise of three days' pillage is to commence. In consequence, the streets are almost deserted, except for the patrols of Red Guards. When we reached the little restaurant, Zichy was shown into an inner room containing about a dozen diners. I noticed they were of a different stamp to the "Comrades"

one saw at the Ritz and other hotels. Zichy informed me this was the meeting-place of the supporters of the old order, and that everyone I saw was an ardent royalist and anti-Bolshevist. I asked him why the place was not raided by the Red Guards. Zichy replied: "Because the Police are still loyal. They are obliged to obey the orders of the new government because they have all been disarmed, but they are ready to strike the moment a serious Counter-Revolution can be organized. The policemen outside in the street will give us ample warning if a raid is threatened, then we can all slip away to our hiding-places."

Our hostess produced quite a good meal. After dinner Zichy said to me: "Would you like to see what life is like under a Bolshevik régime? I know a lady who has a flat not far from here. We will go round and visit her."

Mdlle. Z. is one of the leading musical comedy actresses in Budapest. Her apartment consists of two bedrooms and two sitting-rooms. She is now allowed to keep one room for herself and three strange men have been put in to sleep and live in the others. Mdlle. X. has, however, managed to get a waiter she knows in one of the restaurants to come to the flat as a "Comrade," and he brought with him two friends. They thus allowed her to keep two rooms for herself and her maid. This is the great triumph of a Bolshevik régime—the mixing up of the sexes and classes so as to make all uncomfortable. It is an open question who is the most embarrassed and miserable—an aristocrat with two or three families of "Comrades" in his gilded halls, or the "Comrades" amidst such strange surroundings.

On our way home we found the streets completely deserted. There was not even a cab and we looked like having to walk for several kilometres back to the hotel. Fortunately we came across a peasant in a country cart who undertook, for a consideration, to take us home.

*April 1st.* Goldman arrived from Vienna this morning

by a train which took 42 hours instead of the pre-war five. He brought some letters and some tinned food, of which we all stand badly in need. He reports all quiet in Vienna, but the authorities fear an outbreak of Bolshevism in Austria, unless the Entente takes urgent steps to check the movement in Hungary.

Old Count Dessewffy crept into the hotel, incognito, to discuss final plans for the departure of his grandchildren to Vienna next week. In spite of his incognito, he is perfectly well known to everyone.

Freeman was the next visitor, and we had a long talk on the whole situation, which he considers to be very grave. He tells me that the two monitors which we took over from the Hungarian Government and manned with British crews are held up by the mine-field eighty kilometres below Budapest. He has made urgent representations to Bela Kuhn to have this obstruction removed and if he does not obtain any satisfaction, he proposes to go down the river himself, and has asked me to accompany him.

Although nearly everybody has fled from Budapest, there is a little coterie still living at the Ritz Hotel as semi-prisoners of the Soviet Government—that is to say, they are allowed their freedom, but are unable to leave the country because passports are refused them or are short of money. They consist of Baroness Bonamissa, an American woman married to a Hungarian now dead, who has a charming daughter; the Countess Czarty, who has since married Commander E. W. Dillon, formerly of the Mission; an ex-Turkish Minister and his wife, Monsieur and Madame Djeval Bey, and a Monsieur and Madame Aftalion, who are Rumanians. They have all placed themselves under the protection of Freeman and Professor Browne. All are terrified at the prospect of trouble breaking out, and of being cast into prison and having their property and money confiscated. Baroness Bonamissa never leaves the Professor for a moment, and every

hour of the night and day she importunes him to help her to leave this unhappy land. Now the Professor is such a strict observer of diplomatic etiquette that, even in the midst of these unnatural times, he refuses to help anyone. In consequence, he is bullied by all the stranded ladies and has tons of abuse in four or five different languages heaped on his devoted head.

I went across the river to dine with the manager of the biggest Co-operative Society in Hungary. He lives in a fine house on the Buda side with his wife and children, and is apparently allowed his freedom by the "Comrades" because they need his practical advice in carrying on the various branches of the company. His is a typical example of the life of the industrial magnate under the Bolshevik régime. X. tells me that the business to which he has devoted his lifetime has been completely ruined by the Revolution, and the management has now been taken over by a couple of Jew boys who understand nothing whatsoever about it. The profits are seized by the Government, and X. is obliged to give his time and experience gratis, for by the new law, he is not allowed to make any more by way of salary than any one of his workmen, although formerly his income and profits amounted to ten thousand pounds a year. Both he and his wife are extremely bitter against the new Government, which they declare is merely out to rob and swindle everyone. This man finds himself in a position similar to thousands of others. He devoted his life to building up this business throughout Hungary, and became rich and prosperous. Now he finds himself a kind of gilded pauper, with a large house on his hands, which may be filled with "Comrades" at any moment; all his money in the banks has been seized by the Government and he has nothing, except the salary of a farm labourer, with which to support himself and his family in the state to which they have been accustomed.

On returning home across the river, I found the streets



quite deserted. No one remains out after dark for fear of being robbed or thrown into the Danube—several outrages of this kind have already been reported. I never venture out in the streets without a couple of automatic pistols, one of which I hold ready to fire at a second's notice, and I am not going to wait to ask for any explanations if I am molested.

I found Freeman sitting up in the hotel, racking his brains as to what to do to meet the ever increasing difficulties of the position. He tells me the Government have now succeeded in enlisting twenty-five thousand Red Guards. They receive two days' food; two weeks' pay in advance; and are also allowed one week's leave of absence. Thus the majority have rolled up at several different places of enlistment to obtain several days' food; several weeks' pay; and several weeks' leave. It is, therefore, next to impossible to arrive at the correct figures of the new army under such circumstances.

*April 2nd.* The air is fuller than ever of wild rumours. It is said the Entente has delivered an ultimatum to the Soviet Government, namely, an immediate occupation of Budapest by the troops of the Entente and the appointment of a Military Governor. It is difficult to say what effect such a step will have. Probably the Government will split or retire to the country, and Budapest will be left without any government and delivered up for several days to the tender mercies of the mob. Freeman tells me he is expecting a relief ship up from Belgrade to take away all the English residents in the town. For several days this ship has been expected, but they can obtain no news of its whereabouts, and he proposes to leave for Belgrade and find out for himself.

*April 3rd.* There was great excitement in Budapest this morning. At 11 a.m. the sounds of martial music, coming from the Buda side of the Danube, attracted my attention. Looking from my window across the river, I saw great crowds marching towards the Palace, intermingled with

detachments of Red Guards, carrying their banners bedecked with flowers and free gifts from the shops. These banners, covered with every conceivable article like a children's Christmas tree, are to be seen in every street in Budapest these days. They are decorated by an original and delightful system of patriotic extortion. Each regiment of Red Guards, when about to leave for the front, has the right to parade its banners through the shopping districts and to obtain free gifts from the unfortunate shopkeepers. A Red detachment visits each shop in turn, with the punctuality and regularity of Sisters of Charity in France, and in the mildest manner requests some little contribution to help the "Comrades" on their way to the front. They do not wait for an answer, but proceed to take what they fancy. Thus one sees banners bedecked with a miscellaneous and utterly useless collection of articles for soldiers in the field—silver pencils, Bridge scorers, packs of cards, inkstands, silver spoons, post cards, fountain pens, ladies' slippers, odd stockings, hats, gloves, handkerchiefs, while on one banner I saw proudly displayed on the topmost branch a pair of ladies' knitted combinations. It is difficult to see what use a pair of ladies' combinations can be to a regiment about to march to the Rumanian frontier, or what employment a pair of ladies' silk stockings can be put to at the front. But all is fish that comes to the Bolshevik net, and the marauding "Comrades" soon dispose of them to their lady friends, or sell at enforced prices what they do not require for the regimental use.

When I first saw this procession, I thought it was one of the customary demonstrations which are made almost every morning in the open square in front of the Palace, but a second glance showed it to be on a much bigger scale. I hired a carriage and drove across the river over the old bridge, joining up with the tail of the procession as it mounted the hill, and quickly discovered that some serious trouble was brewing. The mob was in an ill-

humour and hooted me as I slowly drove by. It was composed of genuine working-men who seemed weak from lack of food, mixed up with the dregs of the population. Their attitude became so threatening that I thought it wiser to abandon the carriage and get myself lost in their midst as an ordinary spectator.

On arriving at the Palace square, I found it packed with people, while order was being maintained by several companies of Red Guards. Every lamp post was festooned with humanity and every window looking on the square packed with eager spectators. The mob was being addressed by speakers from the balcony of the War Office, but, being without an interpreter, I could not discover the cause of the trouble. It was quite evident, however, that grave discontent existed amongst the workers, and that the demonstration was being directed against the Government. Pogany seemed to be the especial butt of the people's wrath, for whenever his name was mentioned, it was greeted with hoots and jeers. In fact, the attitude of the crowd became so threatening that I decided it would be better to leave before it broke up. I slipped quietly away, found my abandoned carriage and drove back to the hotel. On trying to cross the old bridge I found my passage blocked by another immense procession, also making its way towards the Palace. It does not look as though the Soviet Government is living on a bed of roses.

There is much comment and excitement in the town as to the meaning of these processions. I had a talk with Freeman, who said he had learnt that Pogany had been dismissed from the Ministry of War and placed under arrest to satisfy the people, and that Böehm had taken his place. Two reasons are given for the dismissal of Pogany :

(1) The extreme Communists are disappointed at his moderation and his failure to allow Szamuely's promise of three days' looting of the capital to be carried out, and, in consequence, they marched to the Palace to protest.

(2) The iron and steel workers of the great Manfred

Weiss and other works, marched to the Palace to protest against Communism, with which they will have nothing to do now they realize what it means. These steel workers made a great deal of money during the war, and now, under Bolshevism, they find it is worth little more than the paper it is printed on, and at the same time they are unable to obtain the bare necessities of life for their families.

Later in the day I heard a new reason, and probably the true one, for the dismissal of Pogany. As Minister of War, he attempted to send a battalion of Red Guards to the Rumanian front, but they refused to leave, preferring the easier life and delights of the capital. Whereupon, Pogany attempted to have the leaders arrested by another battalion of Red Guards, who also mutinied and refused to go against their comrades. These events have thrown the town into a wild state of excitement, and grave disorders are expected.

The great tragedy of the last two days has been the attempted suicide of Manfred Weiss, the great steel magnate, and the richest man in Hungary, who is said to have accumulated a fortune of five hundred million crowns during the war. Disgusted with seeing his works communized and his fortune disappearing into thin air by the political action of his co-religionists, two nights ago he attempted suicide by taking veronal, and now lies in a precarious condition in hospital under arrest.

This evening, just before dinner, the unhappy inmates of the Ritz received a terrible scare which has quite unnerved the lot of them. I was in my room when I heard a commotion outside the door, and on opening it, I found the Baroness Bonamissa, Countess Czarty, Madame Djeval Bey, the Aftalions, and a crowd of others all scared to death. They told me an unruly gang of Red Guards had just entered the hall of the hotel, and had announced their intention of making a room-to-room search for jewels, money and arms. Now all the wealth these unfortunates



possess is in their personal belongings, jewellery, furs, and any cash they have with them, and if this is taken they will be reduced to a worse position than paupers in the streets. Therefore, they had rushed to my room to deposit all their valuables with me, without even asking my consent, for such gifts are dangerous. Before I had time to protest, I was literally snowed under with pearl necklaces, diamond colliers, bracelets, rings, gold and silver cigarette cases, gold pencils and bijoux of every description. Bulging cases filled with notes were shoved into my pocket without my having the least idea who had put them there, and as I stood there, I must have been worth several million francs.

Two days before this, the Soviet Government, at the instigation of Freeman, had issued printed notices to be placed on the doors of the rooms of certain foreigners, giving them immunity from molestation and search by the Red Guards. Unfortunately I found I had not got one on my door, and therefore I decided to make a rapid bolt for Freeman's room, which is alongside Professor Browne's apartment. I seized both my pistols and followed by the whole crowd of scared ladies and men, descended to Freeman's room to await developments.

Freeman was there with Professor Browne and we determined to resist this gang to the end. Fortunately the Red Guards were lured from their purpose by the cleverness of the hotel manager, who offered them another bribe which appealed to them even more strongly than a jewel hunt throughout the rooms of the Ritz. In the politest manner he invited the lot down to the kitchen to have dinner before they commenced their search of the rooms. Here they were right royally entertained for a long time and plied with viands and wine. This gave Freeman and Browne time to communicate with the proper authorities, and a fresh force of Red Guards was despatched by the Bolshevik leaders to turn out their drunken comrades and preserve order in the hotel. I believe, however, that the

inhabitants of the Ritz owed their safety to quite another cause, which I will explain.

This evening, we learnt for the first time that a Mission, under General Smuts—the leader of the Entente's forlorn hopes—is actually on its way to negotiate with the Soviet Government. This news caused us the worst forebodings, but delighted Professor Browne. The idea of negotiating with Bela Kuhn and his fellow robbers filled us with apprehension. Macartney, Freeman and I held a hasty consultation. We agreed to unite our joint efforts to give Smuts a true picture of the Bolshevist leaders and their policy, and to stop the official recognition of Bela Kuhn at all costs; and also to do everything in our power to check the malicious propaganda of Professor Browne, who is quite incapable of seeing the situation aright.

But it was the arrival of Smuts which undoubtedly saved the Ritz from being looted on the night of April 3rd. The Soviet Government, having just heard the news of his coming, could not allow such a discreditable incident to occur, which would infallibly have produced an unfavourable impression on the Boer General's mind.

The moment the Red Guards had been induced to leave the hotel, the guests were seized with an intense longing to regain possession of their property. It was past midnight when the "All clear" was sounded by the friendly waiter on my floor. I returned to my room, locked the door, and emptied all my bulging pockets on to the bed. The counterpane sparkled with priceless gems—diamonds, pearls, rubies, emeralds, gold and silver, flanked by huge wallets bursting with notes of almost every European currency. The contents of Tut-Ankh-Amen's tomb paled into insignificance before the treasures on my bed. I decided to lock the whole lot in my bag until the following morning, as I had no idea to whom each particular article belonged.

I had hardly made up my mind when there came a timid knock at the door, and one of the strangers entered my

room. "I have come to ask you for my jewellery and money, as I do not wish to trouble you by leaving them with you during the night." The speaker made his selection and departed. Another knock followed, another timid head was poked round the door, and a similar request came, followed by a similar selection of precious stones; and so on for an hour in succession the frightened ones turned up—no longer having any use for my services. Only the Baroness Bonamissa, her daughter, and the Aftalions trusted me with their belongings during the night. It was past one o'clock when my beautiful Arabian-night-like pile of precious stones had melted almost to nothing.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE COMING OF GENERAL SMUTS

*Friday, April 4th.* There has been a general feeling in Budapest during the past week that Bela Kuhn and his Soviet Government are tottering to a fall. But to-day all these hopes were dashed to the ground, and the Bolsheviks have gained a moral victory, which has established them more firmly than ever in the saddle. Bela Kuhn has, in fact, reached the high water mark of his achievements. He was able to announce to the Hungarian people that no less a person than General Smuts, the favoured delegate of the Supreme Council of the Entente, had come all the way from Paris in a special train, accompanied by a large staff, to negotiate with him, thus in fact tacitly recognizing the "de facto" government now in power.

Sunshine has indeed shone brightly on the Bolshevik leaders this morning, and a cloud of despair has settled over the Counter-Revolution party. Yet no one expected the Mission to arrive so soon.

Macartney had gone to the Palace to have an interview with Garbai, the nominal President of the Soviet Council, who in reality is a mere tool in the hands of Bela Kuhn. At 11 a.m. he learnt that the General's train was already in the station and that Bela Kuhn was there to receive him. This was disquieting news to us, as it meant that Bela Kuhn and Co. would get the General's ear before ourselves, but we were comforted by the reflection that Freeman had probably already put a spoke in the Bolshevik wheel. I found a joyful atmosphere among the Hotel



Communists, and in honour of this great day a large Union Jack had been hoisted on the portico of the Ritz.

Macartney and I lost no time, but hurried off to the station. We found the special train, surrounded by a hoard of Soviet officials and ministers, all dressed in their very best frock-coats looted from the deserted houses of the Counts. The party consisted of General Smuts; his Intelligence Officer, Colonel Heyward; Captain Lane, A.D.C., and Reggie Nicholson from the Foreign Office, together with a Dutch doctor, who strongly resembles Smuts in appearance. The General was busy talking to Bela Kuhn in his private saloon, so Macartney and I spent an hour and a half with Reggie Nicholson, giving him a detailed account of the situation. It was not necessary to enlighten Nicholson very much, in the first few minutes it was easy to discover that he strongly disapproved of the General's Mission and of giving recognition to the Soviet Government, and he felt certain that no good would come of the journey. He, like ourselves, was all in favour of a military occupation of the Capital, so as to give the constitutional parties a chance to establish a government.

At 12.45 Bela Kuhn, arrayed in a new frock-coat, his ugly face beaming with smiles, emerged from the General's saloon. It was indeed a day of triumph for him, for he had constantly boasted that he would force the Entente to acknowledge his Government, and now his dreams seemed about to be realized. General Smuts invited Macartney and myself to lunch with him, and we had the opportunity of a very long talk. How strange it seemed to meet the General in such circumstances, for just twenty years before, filled with youthful enthusiasm, I had gone to the South African War, and spent many weary months, until my health broke down, chasing the General and his friends over the trackless veldt for hundreds of miles. I am bound to admit the historical fact that I failed to catch him, or even to catch a sight of him. But now at last I

had run my old enemy to earth in the railway train at Budapest, where he had come to negotiate on behalf of those who had so relentlessly tracked him over Africa twenty years before.

The General is one of the most patient of listeners, and any details that he might not have known about the Hungarian situation before, he must have been fully informed on by the time we left him. He takes in every detail, never interrupts—except to elucidate some point—and never expresses an opinion. Whatever his views may be, they remain a sealed book until he considers the right moment has arrived to express them. He is a man of the greatest charm of manner, and well deserves his popularity, even if one cannot always agree with his views. Smuts is an apostle of austere living and refused to allow any luxuries aboard of his train, through a delicacy of feeling that they would form a painful contrast to the conditions of life in the countries which he was to visit, and in consequence the lunch was somewhat disappointing.

The Soviet Government, wishing to impress the people with the fact that they had obtained official recognition by the Entente, had reserved rooms for the whole party at the Ritz, placed a special guard outside the hotel, and had hoisted the British Flag in the General's honour. They organized an official banquet at the hotel and invited General Smuts and the whole of his Staff to be present, in order that they might make speeches of welcome and publish them throughout the length and breadth of the land as complete proof that their "de facto" Government was recognized by Europe. Great therefore was the consternation when it became known that the General and his Staff had refused to accept any hospitality, and would not even leave their train for the comfortable quarters provided for them at the Ritz.

Here was a grave dilemma, for the dinner had already been ordered, the covers laid, the guests invited, and a special decree of the Supreme Council had ordained that

on this auspicious occasion the members of the Government, their guests and their friends might indulge as freely as they liked in alcoholic beverages, which had been prohibited by law ever since the fall of the Karolyi Government. Now it was impossible to call off this banquet, for it would have been a confession that the Soviet leaders had met with a nasty rebuff and might jeopardize their social position in the eyes of their followers, and the cancellation would have been a cruel blow to many warm supporters of a return to alcoholism. They therefore decided to camouflage their disappointment at the refusal of the Smuts' Mission to attend, by making out that the banquet had been organized in honour of the representatives of the Foreign Press in Budapest, and by making Macartney and myself their principal guests.

Now I was loath to attend, as I was a known enemy of the Soviet régime, and had no desire to accept their hospitality under such conditions. At the same time I realized that in the long hours of the night a liberal supply of alcohol would unloose their tongues, and probably lead to the unburdening of many a secret of the utmost importance from their troubled souls. Certain members of the Smuts' Mission, when I laid the matter before them, however, strongly advised us to accept the invitation.

This banquet, the most remarkable it has ever been my lot to be present at, was held in the inner hall of the Hotel Ritz, at one long table, but, unfortunately, Bela Kuhn, as head of the Government, decided to absent himself now that General Smuts and his staff had refused to be present. But, with the exception of Bela Kuhn, almost all the prominent leaders and their satellites, the journalists of Budapest, were present, including Böehm, the People's Commissary for Propaganda; Pogany, the People's Commissary for War; Professor Argoston, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs; Kunji Hercoq, Chief of the Press Bureau at the Foreign Office, one of the leading journalists who helped to establish the Republic, and a crowd of

others, all rank Communists, either from conviction, or from a desire to exploit the general chaos prevailing in the country.

I have never known the Bolsheviks on such good terms with themselves and with life in general. They greeted Macartney and myself as if we had been their life-long friends and admirers; as old college chums who had turned up for a convivial reunion of the old boys of a public school. They began to ply us with drinks long before we had even taken our places at the table. To their extreme satisfaction, two American officers, attached to Professor Browne's Mission, came in after dinner to join the party, so that they were able to proclaim, after all, that some official representatives of the Entente had been present. There were no speeches, except a short one by myself thanking them, on behalf of the Press, for their hospitality, which was replied to by Argoston, who seemed to be presiding over the banquet (as far as it is possible for anyone to preside at a party where all take their own seats and frequently change them in the course of dinner, as one gets tired of one's immediate neighbour). For the rest, it was a convivial entertainment, at which, after a short period, the only subjects discussed were the respective merits and differences between Constitutional Government, Absolute Government, and Bolshevism. The real interest lies in the fact that every one of the "Comrades" became very much the worse for drink, the entertainment lasting from eight p.m. until 3 a.m. downstairs, and then for another hour, when drink had run out, in my rooms upstairs, and in their cups they disclosed the inmost secrets of their souls and revealed all the plans for the propaganda of Bolshevism throughout the whole of Europe. Enormous quantities of Hungarian champagne were consumed, in addition to every other kind of Hungarian wine, and no one can claim to have put away more than Böehm, the Commissary for War, who did most of the speaking throughout the evening. Even the sullen Pogany seemed



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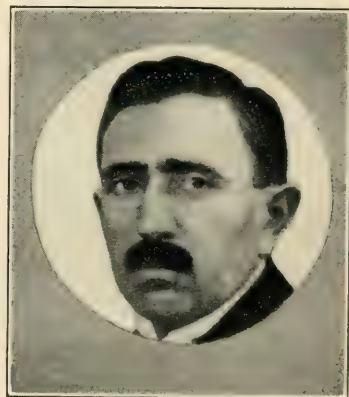
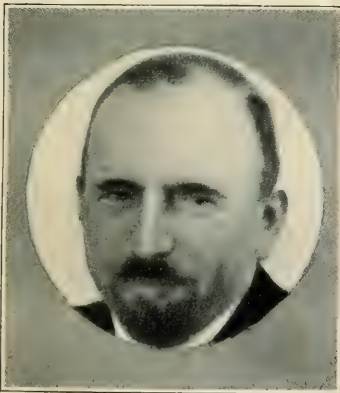
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1. Bela Kuhn
3. Pagany
5. Argoston

6

2. Boëhm
4. Szamuely
6. Josef Haubrich

BOLSHEVIST LEADERS



to shake off the ghost of Count Tisza, which is said to haunt him, drank freely, and became quite cheerful.

I will now give a resumé of the conversation, as it disclosed the full programme of the Soviet Government, in 1919.

Böehm: "You remember when we were in Szatmar with Karolyi, I told you that if the Entente went on treating Hungary in the way it is doing, we would have no alternative but to become Bolshevists?" I replied: "Yes, and I cabled to England to the same effect." Böehm went on: "Well, you see now what has happened. Four weeks ago I was not a Bolshevist, and neither was Pogany or any of the others here to-night. But what happened? We were treated like dogs by the Entente. Our enemies were allowed to occupy our richest territories and to rob and steal and outrage our people. We were constantly insulted by the French, who have always behaved like cads. We have not found a gentleman amongst the lot of them. The French killed off all their gentlemen at the time of the Revolution and have never produced one since, but we have found a good many Bolshevists amongst them. You should have seen the way Franchet d'Esperey treated Karolyi and the Deputation of the Soldiers' and Sailors' Councils, when they went to Belgrade to arrange the terms of the Armistice. He started by saying: 'So, you have Soldiers' Councils, vous êtes tombés si bas!' Then he pulled another member over to the window and said: 'Come here, I want to have a good look at you. Ah! I see you must be a Jew by your nose.' From that hour we have never been able to obtain a hearing or any redress for our grievances. The Entente has listened to the Czecho-Slovaks, to the Yugo-Slavs, to the Rumanians, to all our enemies in fact, but they would never listen to us. The Entente has made more stupid mistakes in handling the Hungarian question than anyone could ever have believed possible. We used to think President Wilson was a great man, now we know he is a fool, and in fact

all the people at the Conference seem to be fools. But what do they signify now? Absolutely nothing at all. The Conference has no more power, for it has no troops to send anywhere. They dare not send a man out here through fear of Bolshevism. You English no longer have an army. We have heard for certain that it has entirely broken up and that all those who remain are such Bolsheviks at heart that the Government daren't send them anywhere. If they came here they would join the ranks of our 'International Regiments' within a week." (Of course we contradicted these wild statements!) "The Entente thinks it has won the war, but in reality it is we, the Bolsheviks of the World, who have won the victory. We shall sweep over Europe and everyone will have to join us. Why, do you know the French are deserting to us!" I replied that I had not seen any at the reviews of the International Regiments of Red Guards. Pogany answered: "No, we have not brought them to Budapest; at present they are in the country." I said: "Why don't you bring them here? If I see them I will believe what you say." Argoston broke in: "Do you really want to see some? How many do you want to see?" "Well, I don't want to try you too high, so show me one." Argoston and Pogany both replied: "Show you one; why, we will show you two hundred—when would you like to see them?" I answered: "Well, let us say the day after to-morrow. I will give two crowns a head for every one you are able to show me." Böehm replied: "You will be ruined." I asked how much they paid these Frenchmen. Böehm replied: "Only three crowns a day. We give our own troops fifteen, but three is quite enough for any Frenchman, all of whom are cowards and won't fight." I said: "Will you let me see these Frenchmen and talk to them freely by myself?" Böehm and Pogany answered: "Yes, certainly you shall." Of course they never produced one.

I asked Böehm how it was that they had not been able



to induce a single man of the five hundred French Colonial Infantry captured on the frontier and brought to Budapest, to desert and join the Red Army. He was much embarrassed and tried to turn the matter into a joke by saying: "Well, the truth is this. They told us they were quite willing to become Bolsheviks, but that they must wait until we could give them drink. They said they could not join a dry Bolshevik army. That is the same with you English. We shall have to give you plenty of drink, and then you will become Bolsheviks quick enough."

Böehm continued: "Vix lied when he said he had not declared to Count Karolyi, in presenting the Delobit Note, that the new line of demarcation would be the future political frontier of Hungary. He had not only told us in the most emphatic terms that the new line would be the political frontier, but he did it in the rudest possible manner, as if he took a delight in rubbing it in. Vix is a man without manners, and always tried to insult us. I was present myself, and know exactly what passed." Macartney asked him who translated at this interview. Böehm replied: "It was Berinkey (Prime Minister under Karolyi), who speaks French perfectly."

I asked Böehm why, instead of waging a class warfare to the ruin of the country, they did not embrace the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie, and form a constitutional government, such as we have in England. Böehm answered: "We won't have anything to do with them. They ruled the country for a thousand years, and what did they do for us? Why, do you know that up to the time of my fortieth birthday I had not even got a vote. They never did anything for the country, and now they have run away like the lot of cowards they are." I said: "Well, you could hardly expect them to remain if you frighten them the way you do, and adopt all these repressive measures." Böehm then got very angry and turned on me saying: "I know what you did when you were here before. I listened to all your conversations on the telephone myself.

It was you who drew up those proposals for Electoral Reform which were handed by you to Karolyi in the name of Pallavicini. If we could catch Pallavicini now, we would have him shot; he had no right to put his case in the hands of a foreigner. Why could not the opposition deal with the Government direct, instead of through you?" I replied: "Your facts are not correct. I was merely an intermediary, and I really went to see Karolyi on the subject because someone else, whose name I will not mention, had to go away and asked me to act for him. We were only trying to secure a fair election, and merely asked for (1) Freedom of the Press, (2) Freedom of Meeting, (3) Freedom of the subject, and the abolition of the Law of Suspects. What possible objection could you have to these proposals?" A violent quarrel then took place between Böehm and myself on these subjects, and the party looked like breaking up in disorder when some of the others intervened and made us shake hands. The subject was then dropped.

A discussion arose on the subject of the Freedom of the Press. Böehm declared: "There is only one real freedom of the Press, and that is when all papers write under instructions from the Press Bureau. This must be the best system, because Bolshevism is the only possible future form of Government for the whole world, and it is much wiser that all writers should be guided from one source as to what to say, otherwise they are liable to make mistakes and mislead the people." "Why," he added, "instead of writing for a capitalist organization like the 'Times' or the 'Daily Telegraph,' do you not throw in your lot with us? We will pay you far more than you have earned before." I said: "How much will you give me to become a Bolshevik?" He answered: "You can have a million to-morrow morning in English or French money" (meaning, I presume, crowns—roughly £10,000). Pogany and Argoston both confirmed this offer, and assured me the money would be put up at once.

Böehm added: "It is time both the 'Daily Telegraph' and the 'Times' were communised."

Böehm and Pogany were very frank in explaining their military ambitions. Böehm said: "You see what an unexpected thing has happened. The victors in the war have no troops they can rely on to fight, whereas we can raise as many excellent men as we like. In three weeks' time, we shall have one hundred and fifty thousand perfectly equipped and trained men. In six weeks we expect to have five hundred thousand men under arms. The Entente will not be able to say a word to us as they have no troops. Of course it is against the principles of Bolshevism to fight with its neighbours, as the proletariats of all countries must unite; and we carry on our real warfare by propaganda, but we have got to give those dirty . . . (I could not catch the actual word) the Czecho-Slovaks a lesson first, and then we will convert them afterwards to Bolshevism. We will send every man against them, and drive them right out of our territory. They won't be able to stand up against our soldiers for a day. Our men are brave and the Czecho-Slovaks are cowards at heart. We shall only strike when we are absolutely ready. Then Wilson and Lloyd George and the others can scream as loudly as they like. We must fight to insure Wilson's Fourteen Points being carried out. Unfortunately, the Entente has forgotten them, or cannot enforce them. Therefore we must do it ourselves."

Böehm, Pogany and Co. made no concealment of their plans. Böehm, who always remained the chief spokesman, said: "We are going to turn all our neighbours into Bolsheviks. We shall start with the Czecho-Slovaks. Don't you see what a wonderful position geographically Hungary is in as the starting place for Bolshevism? We are surrounded by discontented peoples all ready to adopt our principles. The Czecho-Slovakians, once we have kicked them out of Hungary, will become Bolsheviks right away. For the moment, we shall not bother with Austria.



They are already Bolsheviks, but owing to their material difficulties connected with their food supply, they have told us they must wait a bit longer before throwing in their lot with us. After Czecho-Slovakia then it will be the turn of Rumania; in fact that country may adopt Bolshevism at any minute. Bulgaria is also quite ready to throw in her lot with us. Yugo-Slavia will follow as a matter of course, and then we shall arrive in a solid body on the frontiers of Italy. In three months Italy will come over to us. Then on the 8th of this month, there will be the combined meeting of all the Soldiers' and Workmen's Councils in Berlin. We have absolutely certain information that Germany will adopt Bolshevism. Probably on that day, according to their usual custom, the Entente will make some impossible demand of Germany in the way of indemnities, that will drive all those who might otherwise be opposed to Bolshevism into its ranks. But, in any case, there is not a particle of doubt that the whole of Germany will follow our example. We have the most precise information on this point. Then what becomes of your Entente and its boasted powers and Wilson's Fourteen Points? You will find the whole of Eastern and Central Europe united against France, England, and the United States. The victory will no longer be with you, but with the proletariat of all those countries that adopt Bolshevism. How long do you think France will hold out? Why, we will eat up France in a few months, and then will come the turn of England. Do you realize that all our English propaganda is already printed?" I replied: "Well, we are short of shaving paper." At this they all roared with laughter and Pogany hit Böehm a whack on the back. Böehm went on: "None of you seem to realize how well-organized the forces of Bolshevism are. We have every scrap of paper ready and printed for Czecho-Slovakia, Rumania, Bulgaria, Italy, France and England. No country will be able to hold out against us."

Böehm's next statement was about the forgery of paper



money. This amazing disclosure arose out of a long discussion on the financial position of countries under Bolshevism, and how, by debasing their money, it would be impossible for them to make purchases from abroad. This would take too long to write, and the facts are too well known to need repetition. But Böehm, who was now well worked-up, suddenly said: "We have all the money we want, we are turning out any amount of English and French notes. Our English notes are the most perfect copies of your Bank of England notes you have ever seen. They are better than the others. Would you like to see some?" I replied: "I always knew you were thieves, but I did not know you were forgers too." They took this in good part, and Böehm went on: "It is not forgery. Imitation notes are a legitimate weapon with which to fight capitalism. They are the proletariat's money. The people have just as much right to issue notes as the bankers. We will issue so many that eventually the capitalist's notes will become worthless."

Some of the party seemed to think Böehm was going too far, and two of them whispered in his ear, whereupon he changed the subject.

I said: "Why don't you and Pogany, and some of the others come to England and study constitutional government such as exists there, before you proceed to ruin Hungary by your absurd legislation and childish ideals?" Pogany replied: "For the very good reason that we should be arrested and shot." Later in the evening they again reverted to the subject, and Böehm said: "Were you serious when you talked about our visiting England?" I replied: "Why not? But naturally you would have to give a solemn promise to abstain from Bolshevist propaganda." Böehm then said: "Well, I have talked the matter over with Pogany, and we both think it would be an excellent thing if we could go—can you arrange it?" I answered: "I can only lay the matter before the proper authorities. It will naturally be for them to decide. But

I don't suppose that anything can be done until after peace is signed." Böehm replied: "There is no peace to sign. You have no one to sign it with unless you adopt Bolshevism."

I said: "You talk a great deal about your Bolshevism, but, when one analyses it, it turns out to be a gigantic conspiracy of the Jews against the civilization of Europe. The lower class Jews of all these countries are combining against the Christians, so as to gather all power and wealth in their own hands." This statement aroused a furious denial from all the Jews. "Well," I added, "if you deny the truth of my statement, how is it that every single man in the Soviet Council is a Jew? You killed Christ nineteen hundred years ago, and last Sunday you tried to put an end to God too by forbidding the holding of any more services in the churches." Böehm and Pogany replied between them: "That is not true, some of our leading Bolsheviks are Christians." They then proceeded to write a list of names on paper of some of the leaders who were not Jews. I had never heard of any of them rising to any great prominence. The discussion on this subject seemed distasteful and was thereupon dropped.

A great many other matters were talked over, but I think I have dealt with the most important. In all the conversations Pogany and Böehm were the chief speakers, but they were assisted by expert advice from the others who were gathered round. It is interesting to note that in a conversation with two Americans on the morning of April 4th, Garbai, the President of the Soviet Council, practically made the same statement, word for word, on the subject of their plans for the propaganda of Bolshevism throughout foreign countries.

They would not give a definite answer on the subject of communising women.

At 3 a.m. all the drink in the dining-room had been consumed, and then the leaders, Pogany and Böehm, and about eight other hardy survivors, who alone remained in

a state to walk, calling loudly for yet more liquor, came up to my private room and finished off six more bottles of strong Rhine wine, after which I made them all some cocoa.

At 4 a.m. they left swearing eternal friendship and declaring that in another three months they would make me a true Bolshevik, and that in another year the whole of Europe would have joined the movement.

Macartney and I found it extremely difficult to keep our wits about us during this entertainment. We were obliged to drink vast quantities of wine, and it was only when the "Comrades" became too drunk to notice what we were doing that we succeeded in emptying our glasses on the floor and then handing them up to be replenished.

## CHAPTER VII

### A VOYAGE DOWN THE DANUBE

*April 5th.* I awoke this morning somewhat exhausted by this fearsome frolic with the Soviet leaders, and thoroughly fed-up with Budapest. I came to the conclusion that in view of what information I had obtained, it would be best for me to return to Vienna, so as to be able to place it in the hands of the proper authorities, and I asked Heyward for permission to return on General Smuts' train, which was readily granted.

The General himself was kept busy throughout the morning, having further consultations with Garbai, President of the Soviet Council, with Bela Kuhn, and with the Chiefs of the Armistice Convention. At 12.30 a message reached me to say the train would leave at once, and I hastened to the station. But it showed no signs of going. In the afternoon I spent four hours writing a complete account of the proceedings of the previous night, a copy of which I handed to Reggie Nicholson for transmission to General Smuts.

It was not until 8 p.m. that the train steamed out of the station. No one seems to know what the result of the Mission has been, but the general consensus of opinion is that it has come to nothing.

In addition to the Smuts party, Dr. Bulgar, the newly-appointed Bolshevik Ambassador in Vienna, and his secretary were on the train. We all dined at the General's table, but the conversation consisted chiefly of generalities and politics were eschewed.

*Sunday, April 6th.* We arrived at Vienna at 6 a.m.



Then I learnt that the Smuts' Mission would leave immediately for Prague to interview President Masaryk, and would then return to Paris viâ Vienna. I found on my arrival at the Hotel Bristol the whole of the Dessewffy family once more united, the children having safely come through from Budapest on the German train, with false passports given by the German Ambassador.

I found Vienna seething with excitement, and although the Government and the Police seem to have the populace well in hand, an outbreak is anticipated at any moment. The hotels are more packed than ever, as the city is crowded with refugees from Hungary. Many of the upper classes, who have succeeded in escaping, are now in the city, others are hourly expected, but the fate of many remains uncertain. Most of the rich Jewish business men and bankers have also made good their escape. The plight of these refugees is pitiful—millionaires a week before, they are now reduced to penury, and have nothing but the clothes in which they escaped to stand up in; their property has been confiscated, their money seized, and their homes invaded by crowds from the poorer districts of Budapest. Many are separated from their families, and have yet to learn what has become of them. All are very indignant over the Smuts' Mission to Budapest, as they fear it will be followed by the recognition of Bela Kuhn in Paris, which will mean establishing a Bolshevik Government in Hungary for a long time to come. We certainly seem to be in for some exciting times.

*Monday, April 7th.* My secretary, Goldman, turned up from Budapest, bringing me letters from Macartney, who remained after the Smuts' Mission had left. He writes me that the Bolshevik leaders regard the visit of General Smuts as a tremendous triumph for themselves. They have published the news of their official recognition by the Entente far and wide throughout the country, and this has greatly strengthened their hand amongst the wavering elements of the population.

General C. B. Thompson and an American officer arrived from Paris to-day to join the Smuts party. Fortunately, "C.B.," who has now joined the Labour Party, was too late to go to Budapest, as he might have thrown in his lot with Bela Kuhn, having developed distinct Bolshevik traits during the latter part of the war. I saw General Smuts and his Mission at dinner, just before the departure of their train for Paris. The General had read my report and asked me many additional questions. At 9 p.m. the unfortunate Mission, which meant so well and did so much harm, left for Paris.

*Tuesday, April 8th.* I lunched with Baron William Von Ofenheim, who spent twenty years of his business life in London. Ofenheim is one of the cleverest men in Vienna, and no one sees more clearly than he the desperate financial position of the country. In consequence, he is most pessimistic, and considers things are going from bad to worse. Yet, he cannot bring himself to believe that a formerly great nation will be allowed to sink into complete ruin and bankruptcy. He still clings to the belief that some nation, or group of nations, will come forward to save Austria, and lend her money to stabilize her finances and to raise the value of the ever-falling kronen by loans, spread over a period of years. Baron Ofenheim, like so many others, does not make allowance for the enormous financial difficulties which confront all the Entente Powers, and what a little spot on the distant horizon Vienna and its troubles seem when one is in London or Paris, amidst a thousand gigantic world-problems, which have arisen from the ashes of the Great War.

Ofenheim made me a most useful present of 200 cigarettes and a bottle of whisky—for it is much easier to buy pearls and diamonds than whisky and cigarettes—to such straits has Vienna been reduced.

I dined with the Countess Dessewffy, who has presented Goldman—much to his delight—with a magnificent

cigarette case, as a souvenir of his work in getting her children out of the hands of the Bolshevists. After dinner, Gyury Pallavicini, the son-in-law of Count Julius Andrassy, who was so well-known in London before the war, came in to see me. He wished to consult me about starting a Counter Revolution against the Bolshevists, by organizing in one party all the Hungarian elements driven out of the country and exiled in Vienna and other large towns. Pallavicini, like most Hungarians, believes that the Entente will start the ball rolling by sending troops against Bela Kuhn, or else by occupying the capital, which will give a chance to the old political elements, now exiled, of forming a Constitutional Government. I told him I believed nothing of the sort, and that matters would be allowed to drift, and that if a Hungarian Counter-Revolution was to succeed, it would only be through the determination of the Hungarians themselves. After a long conversation, we agreed to endeavour to unite all the divergent elements which formerly composed the Hungarian political machine, many of whom are very hostile to one another, into one organic whole, and to start a Counter-Revolution. It is important to show the Supreme Council that there is an alternative Government ready to take the place of Bela Kuhn and the Soviets. Pallavicini agreed to arrange a meeting between himself and the Hungarian leaders now in Vienna to settle on a plan of campaign.

*Wednesday, April 9th.* We started work to-day to organize the Counter Revolution. Before doing so, I went to see Sir Thomas Cunningham, to lay the entire scheme before him and to ask his advice. He is entirely in favour of our plans, namely, to unite all political groups into one solid anti-Bolshevist party. He told me he thought the Entente would look favourably on a movement, and might lend some arms and ammunition, but that they would send no troops. In the afternoon Countess Erdody rang me up, asking me to come round at once to meet her son-in-law,

young Count Palfy, who had just arrived from Hungary with his pretty and charming wife. They had had an exciting journey from Western Hungary, and arrived in Vienna with nothing but the clothes on their backs. Palfy gives a favourable account of the position in Western Hungary. He tells me the majority of the peasants are dead against the Bolsheviks; that they are beginning to refuse to sell their produce against worthless paper money, and he thinks it will be comparatively easy to organize a Counter-Revolution amongst them. He says the mass of the peasants are armed with the rifles they took away in the unofficial demobilization of the army on the declaration of the Armistice in November, 1918. The Bolsheviks are already taking steps to terrorize the larger country towns by despatching trains of Red Guards from Budapest, with Extraordinary Tribunals, of which Szamuely is the head. These tribunals arrest anyone on the merest suspicion, and inflict the death penalty at the slightest sign of revolt against their authority. Thus he thinks it will be difficult to make a start with a Counter-Revolution in Western Hungary, unless the Entente makes the first move, by sending troops to the capital. Most of the old officials of the Empire, such as the police and gendarmes, remain faithful to the old régime, and hate the Bolsheviks. Palfy assures me that all the Customs Officials on the frontier are bitterly hostile to Bela Kuhn's government, and it is only through their secret assistance that so many refugees are enabled to escape out of the country.

At 3 p.m. I went round to No. 5 Josephplatz, to have my first meeting with the Counter Revolutionists. Pallavicini had invited some of the more prominent officers to meet me. This huge house is the property of Prince Pallavicini, now absent. In some secret rooms many of the meetings of the Counter Revolutionists were subsequently held and their plans organized. A code of messages and signals was arranged by which the conspirators would receive ample warning of any intervention



of the Austrian Police authorities, or of the Bolshevik organizations in Vienna itself. But from first to last the Vienna Police, under the charming Shrober, the "old Chief," behaved with exemplary impartiality to the refugees in Vienna, and even assisted them on many occasions. But at this time it was not known how long this favourable state of affairs would last, as a change of government in Vienna might jeopardize the liberty of all the Hungarian refugees. Bela Kuhn and Co. never ceased to use their influence to induce the Government of Bauer to expel the refugees or to send them back to Hungary, which would have been the equivalent of death or imprisonment for the majority. We held a preliminary discussion, and agreed on a formal plan of campaign, pending the arrival of other leaders, still unknown to me, on their way to Vienna through diverse routes across the frontier.

In the midst of our discussion, we were suddenly interrupted by the entry of a charming young lady, somewhat travel-stained, but full of life and determination, with her spirits in no wise damped by adversity. Pallavicini greeted her with these words: "Hullo! Caya, where on earth have you turned up from?" He then introduced me to his sister-in-law, the Countess Caya Andrassy. This young lady, of whom no news had been heard for some time past, had been caught by the revolution in the country. Nothing daunted, she set out to walk to the Austrian frontier, disguised as a peasant woman, and had succeeded in making her escape, and had then come on to Vienna by train. She arrived like so many others, quite destitute of worldly goods and with no clothes, except those she stood up in. Let me say a word for the Hungarian ladies throughout these troublous times. They are women of infinite spirit and their good looks are world-famous. Accustomed to the greatest luxury, they bore hardships and misfortunes with unflinching courage and determination. Their belief in the eventual downfall of Bolshevism never failed them. Without jewels, without money, and often

almost without clothes, their haughty characters and pluck never wavered, and they were willing to make any sacrifices, or to run any risks to save the country from the Reds. From the hour of her arrival in Vienna, Caya Andrassy became one of the most ardent of Counter Revolutionists, and at the darkest hours, when everything seemed to be lost, she cheered up the failing spirits of the leaders in this strange drama with her cheerful presence and optimism.

This morning I decided to return to Budapest. Goldman came to me with what sounded an agreeable alternative to the awful journey by train, that now takes some twenty-four hours. A friend of his owned a brand-new steam tug, the "Dionysia," which had just been completed at Regensburg, and which he was sending down the Danube to Rumania. Goldman suggested we should go by tug instead of by train, thus seeing the beautiful scenery and having a good rest. I jumped at this chance, little dreaming what was in store for me, and how unsafe the Danube had become under a Bolshevik Government.

Before leaving, I went round to see Cunninghame and explained to him in detail all that had passed at the meeting of the Counter Revolutionists at the Josephplatz on the previous day. He agreed with the plan of campaign in most particulars, and also gave much useful advice.

At noon, I drove to the docks and after a considerable search found the "Dionysia." Twenty years before I had made this same journey by river, accompanied by my father, on our way to the Greco-Turkish War. But all recollection of the voyage had passed from my mind and I looked forward to a perfect rest, lying in an easy chair on the deck admiring the scenery. The "Dionysia" belonged to a wealthy Greek, had a Greek Captain and an Austrian pilot. Just before we started, the ceremony of hoisting the Greek flag for the first time was held. I broke a very bad bottle of claret over the stern. The Greek owner and Captain thereupon seized me by the hand ex-

claiming, "Now, that will bring us luck!" How dangerous are human prophecies!

We steamed at a great pace down the river, being helped by the swollen state of the Danube which has an eight-knot current. It was our intention to pass the night at Pressburg, now in the possession of the Czecho-Slovaks, and to go on at dawn to Budapest. It was 3 p.m. when we sighted the huge, square Castle, which stands above Pressburg, and which was burnt accidentally by Napoleon's troops in 1806. Suddenly we were hailed from the Hungarian bank of the river, and a party of Bolshevik Red Guards emerged from the shelter of the shrubbery and shouted to us to stop. They levelled their rifles and turned two machine guns on the boat, calling out that if we did not come ashore, cannon would open fire on us. The pilot had no alternative but to swing his helm upstream, and to bring the boat alongside the bank. Forty eager Red Guards were waiting to seize the ropes and we were soon made fast to two trees. I have never seen a more unprepossessing lot of ruffians, who looked as if they might massacre us on the spot. We were quite helpless, having no weapons on board except my Mauser pistol. A plank was placed ashore and we landed to show our papers. All these were in order, as the Captain had the Hungarian visa, given in Budapest, to proceed to Rumania, and Goldman and myself had our papers from the Soviet Government. The Red Guards examined these, but were not satisfied and declared we must wait the arrival of the Commandant. Goldman found out that this gang were mostly local Jews from Pressburg, driven out by the Czechs. They were dirty, ignorant, ill-disciplined, and apparently had no one in authority over them. It was our primary object to keep them in a good humour, which we succeeded in doing until two officers appeared. Then our papers were re-examined and we were informed we would have to visit the Commandant who lived somewhere inland. Eight of the Red Guards, one of whom turned



out to be quite a decent fellow, were told off to conduct us, and the remainder were left to keep guard on the boat. We were taken through a wood on the river bank for some four or five kilometres, until we came opposite the town of Pressburg, at a point where there are a few houses. In one of these we found more Red Guards and a telephone, but no Commandant. We were told he would shortly appear, and much unsatisfactory telephoning then followed. We waited for nearly three hours without anything happening and grew both weary and hungry. Finally I suggested we should find a meal in the inn, and in this we were successful, our guards having a good feed at our expense. Two officers—or rather commissaries, for there are no longer officers—appeared and said the Commandant had gone down to the boat and that we must go back there. Having finished our meal, we set out once again, under escort and in the darkness, to make our way back through the woods to the "Dionysia." Thereupon, the friendly Czechs on the further shore could not resist the temptation of firing a few shots as we showed up in the moonlight. There is a kind of unofficial war going on the whole time between the rival forces on the opposite banks of the river. Two days before there had been an engagement in which four Czechs had been killed. Yet, strange to say, the Bolsheviks had a "merry-go-round" fully lighted and at work within a couple of hundred yards of the river, but protected by the bank.

It was past nine o'clock when we regained the boat and found the Commandant, a very agreeable man, a doctor by profession, installed on board. He examined our papers, found them all in order, signed them on the back, and said we were free to go. Thereupon the Red Guards declared they would not accept his orders and that the ship must not leave. An endless altercation then ensued, in which Goldman played the leading part. He asked them by what authority they detained us when the Commandant had proclaimed our papers to be in order, and they replied :



"By the authority of our Local Soldiers' Council which alone can decide." Then Goldman said: "But the Commandant has telephoned to Budapest and has received orders to let us go through without delay." They replied: "That does not matter. You might hand the boat over to the Czechs."

I then said: "I have an appointment with Pogany and Bela Kuhn at twelve o'clock to-morrow morning, and if I am not there, I shall explain to them the reason and have you all punished." They replied: "Our Soldiers' Council does not wish those on board to leave."

Goldman replied: "Well, which is the higher authority, your Soldiers' Council or the Soviet Government in Budapest?" The spokesman of the party answered: "Our Soldiers' Council." Goldman: "Very well, I will tell them in Budapest. They will be delighted to hear this to-morrow." They now put forward a fresh proposition, namely, that they should take the German engineer ashore as a hostage, so that the tug could not start during the night. We absolutely refused this proposal and asked if they had anywhere to put him. They replied: "No, we have no beds." "Very well then," we answered, "we are not going to allow him to be put ashore."

We then invited them to keep some Red Guards on the boat during the night, so that we would not be able to slip off until the morning. This arguing and wrangling went on for two hours until the Red Guards became too weary to keep up the discussion any longer and fell asleep. I then retired below to my cabin, thoroughly fed up with Bolshevism, and hoping for a pleasant voyage on the following day, which would recompense me for all my troubles.

*Saturday, April 12th.* I awoke about 5 a.m. and was gratified to hear the swish of the water as we moved steadily downstream, as it showed we had somehow managed to shake off our captors of the previous evening. At dawn Goldman induced the Red Guards to go ashore, whereupon

the Captain slipped his cable. For some time things went on smoothly until at ten o'clock, when opposite a small village we were again hailed from the shore by the Red Guards. Once more the tug's head was put up stream, and we came alongside the landing-place to find ourselves prisoners in the hands of a large body of Red Guards, but a much more friendly-looking lot than those whose "guests" we had been on the previous day. In fact they seemed to be more frightened of us than we were of them. An officer came aboard carrying a fully-charged Mauser pistol in each hand, and accompanied by several armed soldiers. On examining our papers, he pronounced them to be in perfect order and we were told we could proceed. However, at this stage the crew and the pilots announced that they had nothing to eat and must go on shore to purchase provisions. We, therefore, obtained permission to land and hunted the village for supplies. In this we were successful. Meanwhile, we were run in on the left bank of the river by the Czechs. An officer and one soldier came aboard, but after showing our papers, we were immediately released. After lunch, wearied by the constant stoppages and arrests and the long walk through the forest on the previous day, I went down to my cabin.

Then, worn out, I fell asleep. I do not know how long I had slept when I was aroused by the sound of rifle fire. The shots came in rapid and regular succession. I jumped up, but before I could open the door, Goldman rushed down shouting: "Stay where you are, do not go on deck, they are firing at us." Indeed the firing was coming from both banks, for the Bolsheviks having opened fire on the boat and the shots going right across the Danube, they had aroused the Czechs who returned the fire. I made for the deck, determined to try and stop this insane proceeding, but I had no sooner reached there when I was met by a salvo of forty or fifty rounds from a machine-gun, at the modest range of one hundred metres. I fell on the deck,

behind the iron side of the tug like a loom. Every shot struck the vessel, but none of them penetrated. Meanwhile, at the first shots, the pilot left the bridge to seek safety, and the tug drifted sideways on down stream, out of control, under a vigorous rifle fire. I managed to hoist a white flag on a stick, and then the firing stopped and after a time, the pilot returned to the bridge and brought us alongside a jetty, while two machine guns and about fifty rifles were trained on us. Once more our papers were examined and endless explanations indulged in. Finally they declared they had fired on us by mistake, thinking we were not going to come alongside. This was due to the fact that the pilot was obliged to turn the boat to bring her head up stream before he could bring her alongside.

In the middle of these proceedings, the Czechs on the other side of the river fired some shots across, which threw the whole of the Red Guards into a panic and they ran for shelter behind a brick kiln. But things quieted down after a time and the Greek owner went ashore to visit the Commandant and returned shortly afterwards with permission for us to leave. Meanwhile, our German crew declared they had had enough. They said the war was over and that they had fought for four and a half years, they had wives and families and were not going to risk their lives for two pounds a day and declined to proceed any further. Thereupon I said: "Would it not be wiser to proceed? do you want to go back the way you have come?" I added: "We shall be all right now and quite safe in Budapest." They saw the sense of this argument and gave in. The Austrian pilot, however, refused to steer any longer until he had received an extra five hundred crowns, to which demand the Greek owner was obliged to assent. I was now becoming thoroughly fed-up with my pleasure trip down the Danube, and sincerely wished I had taken the train. Fortunately, this turned out to be the last interruption and without further adventures we reached Budapest, coming to anchor right alongside the Ritz Hotel.

The arrival of the tug flying the Greek flag caused much excitement in the town, and a crowd quickly gathered on the quay to see who we were and what we were doing.

On reaching the Ritz, I found that Macartney had left on the previous day for Vienna, and that Freeman was still away. Otherwise the old faces remained, including Professor Browne, the Aftalions, the Countess Czarty and Estivian Barcy. I was quickly made "au courant" with the situation, which does not seem to have changed much since my departure.

A number of new and oppressive laws have been formulated, but the old game of confiscation and robbery continues unchecked. The town has an even more deserted aspect than before. It looks as if it had been overwhelmed by a plague and half the people fled to escape the pestilence. There are a hundred rumours in the air, but few of them ever turn out to have the slightest foundation of fact. Everyone wanted to know what had been the result of the Smuts visit, but on this point I was quite unable to enlighten them, as I had heard nothing in Vienna. In fact, I should imagine the Entente is in a worse muddle than ever, and has no idea how to meet the evil.



## CHAPTER VIII

### LAST DAYS IN BUDAPEST

*Sunday, April 13th.* I was kept very busy all the morning seeing people who came to seek for news of Vienna and of the Entente's intentions. Young George Edward Zichy came to lunch with me. I found him pale, ill and worried. He has exhausted every means of escape, and cannot obtain a permit. He has been warned by his friends amongst the old police that he is under constant surveillance and may be arrested at any hour, being under grave suspicion on account of his constant association with Macartney and myself. Now he never sleeps in the same house two nights running, and has the air of a hunted criminal. For weeks he has been living under the shadow of the Terror, and no one who has not had actual experience of what that means can imagine how trying it is to the nerves. I advised him to wait no longer, but to slip out of Budapest, disguised as a peasant and make for the Czech frontier, as his father has an estate near there and he would doubtless find the peasants friendly and willing to assist him across the border. He promised to leave to-night, but was too late, as the sequel will show.

I have mentioned before that the Bolshevist Government passed a law prohibiting the use of alcohol, either in restaurants or in private houses, under a penalty of five years' imprisonment, and fifty thousand crowns fine. But Freeman, the gallant sailor, and Browne, the American Professor, had succeeded in getting this rule relaxed as far as Missions and foreign residents were concerned. Thus, when I invited Zichy to lunch with me at the Ritz, I gave him a bottle of claret, of which he sadly stood in need.

I was kept very busy throughout the afternoon, and went down to Barcy's house to tea at 5.30 to meet Maurice Esterhazy, the Emperor Karl's last Prime Minister.

I found him in a terrible state of nervous depression. He had not left Budapest, like so many others, on account of the illness of his wife, but had actually taken some small post under the Bolshevist Government in the Ministry of Agriculture. For this action he was severely criticized by his former friends on their return to power, and has now been forced out of public life and obliged to resign from his clubs. The Hungarians are a most uncompromising race, and will never forgive those who have truckled to the Bolsheviks.

Maurice Esterhazy had not been informed by Barcy of my intended visit and was horrified when I entered the room. His nervousness would not allow him to commit himself to any expression of opinion, and he begged me to leave the house immediately. "If it is found out you have been to see me here, I shall be hopelessly compromised," he said, "there are spies everywhere and they will at once inform the Government." Under these circumstances, I had no alternative but to leave.

I then went to a most unusual entertainment during the Bolshevist régime in Budapest, namely, a small afternoon dance given by the Bulgarian Ambassadors, Madame Nelidorff. There were one or two Americans present, the Aftalions and the Djeval Beys. The music, however, was so indifferent that it was almost impossible to dance. A few friends came to dinner and I gave them wine to drink, telling them they were quite safe at my table.

In the middle of dinner I was called into the hall, where I found a man whom I had previously met with Zichy. He was in a painful state of agitation and handed me a slip of paper. On it was written these words: "I was arrested at six o'clock and have been taken to prison. For God's sake, do what you can to help me. (Signed) Zichy."

So the blow had fallen at last. His friend then gave me the following details. Zichy was arrested at six o'clock this evening in the street, and charged with drinking wine in public. I felt a grave responsibility for this occurrence, as the blame really rested on me. But, on the other hand, I knew this had only been used as a pretext by the Government to get rid of Zichy, who was considered a dangerous Counter-Revolutionist, and being unable to obtain any definite proofs, they had arrested him on this flimsy charge. As food is difficult to obtain in Bolshevik gaols, the two detectives, with an eye to the main chance, accompanied Zichy to the Hotel Hungaria, where they allowed him to dine before being taken to the prison. Of course he had to stand the detectives a good dinner as well. During this respite he had managed, unobserved, to write the message on a slip of paper and pass it to his friend to be delivered to me as soon as possible.

I lost no time in calling Goldman, and set out for the prison. We obtained admittance without difficulty—in fact I think they would have been very pleased to have offered us a long hospitality—and after some delay found an official who spoke French, to whom we were able to explain the object of our visit. This man must have belonged to the old régime, for he seemed to be in a pitiful state of fear, being white at the gills, having large black circles under his eyes, with the perspiration pouring down his face. He stood—according to Goldman—in the utmost dread of the Chief Commissary, to whom he had undertaken to conduct us. We passed through numerous rooms, packed with political suspects, minor criminals, police officers, officials and detectives, and down cold, stone passages with cells on either side. The only industries which do a thriving business under a Bolshevik Government are the prisons. Curiously enough, I recognised among the detectives many gentlemen whom I had seen lunching and dining each day at the Ritz. Evidently the hotel is a hot-bed of spies. These choice characters,

thrown to the surface by Bolshevik upheavals, are not members of the regular police or detective forces. They are volunteers who wish to stand well with the Soviet Government and to earn money by denouncing their fellow citizens. They stroll about the streets, frequent the hotels, restaurants, and theatres, and listen to private conversations. Any sentence which they can construe into an anti-Bolshevik sentiment is at once reported to headquarters, and arrest follows.

Finally we reached the room where the Chief Commissary was installed. He was a man of about thirty-five, with a clean-cut, hard, unsympathetic face, and wearing the orthodox red tie of the Commune. Several other officials, also Jews, came in, attracted by the presence of a foreigner. To this mixed tribunal, I explained my case, through Goldman, declaring that I alone was to blame for the unfortunate plight in which young Zichy now found himself. Then I asked for his immediate release, but this was refused. The Chief Commissary, an ardent Bolshevik, was not sympathetic, declaring Zichy must remain in prison for the night, as his case would be tried on the following morning. I then demanded to be heard as a witness at the trial, to which the Commissary agreed, and promised to inform me when the trial took place. They also undertook to let Zichy know that I was endeavouring to secure his release. Having done all that was possible, I gladly left the prison for the fresher air outside, but with my heart full of misgivings, because I felt more and more certain from the attitude of the officials that the drink charge was merely a useful excuse to keep young Zichy permanently under lock and key. Meanwhile, I had forgotten all about the friends who had been dining with me, and on my return to the hotel about midnight, I found them all assembled in my room in great agitation because they too had been seen drinking with me in public, and now they lived in hourly dread of sharing the same fate as Zichy.



*Monday, April 14th.* I rose early and went to consult Zerkovitch on the Zichy affair. He advised me to lose no time but to go and see people I knew in the Ministry, like Böehm and Agoston. Accompanied by Goldman, I drove to the War Ministry. We had to wait some time in the ante-room and had a long talk with the Chief of the Bolshevik Military Police, whom I had previously met. He is the good-natured, cynical type of Bolshevik who has no real belief in Communism and Bolshevism, but takes it up because it happens to be the authority in power. I took him into my confidence and told him the object of my visit. He assured me there were no political charges against Zichy and that he would be released when all the facts were correctly known. The Chief of Police then remarked cynically, "It does not matter whom we release, because in six weeks we shall all be hanged."

Shortly afterwards, Böehm, always affable and amusing, came out and took me into a small, side room. We had some talk on the general situation, and it struck me he was no longer so confident as he had been on the occasion of the banquet, of the unmixed blessings which Bolshevism brings to a community. But he made one remark worth repeating, because it exemplifies in no uncertain manner the supreme folly of the policy of the Entente.

"You cannot blame us for becoming Bolsheviks. The Entente took absolutely no notice of us at all until we formed a Soviet. Whilst we were endeavouring to establish a Constitutional Government, they merely bullied and insulted us." How could I deny the truth of Böehm's words!

I then laid before him the facts about young Zichy, and explained how the responsibility rested on me. When I concluded, he said: "I will make enquiries at once, and if there is nothing else against him, he will be released this afternoon." I must say I always found Böehm courteous and agreeable in all my dealings with him. He was certainly one of the best of the types produced by

Bolshevism. Under a constitutional government, he would doubtless have started as an agitator, then have developed into a responsible Labour leader, and would certainly have ended his days as a Right Honourable, endeavouring to calm the wild tendencies of his former supporters. But unfortunately, in Hungary, men of this stamp could find no opening in public life until after the fall of the old, worn-out, obsolete Empire, when the steam so long bottled up burst forth into this tremendous upheaval of Bolshevism.

Much relieved at the success of my mission, I returned to the hotel to write. At 12.30 the English steward of the Hetvany's came to conduct me to lunch. They have a beautiful old house on the Buda side of the Danube, close to the Palace. Hetvany is a member of one of the wealthiest Jewish families of Hungary, his fortune being derived from the sugar industry. He did not fly at the outbreak of Bolshevism, and has since been accused of being a sympathizer with their cause. But this I can hardly believe. He is one of the intellectuals and strongly resembles Prince Treubetzky, the New York sculptor. His wife was a Miss Winslow, an Englishwoman, although her mother was a German. She is a sculptress of no mean order. All their rooms have been taken from them by the Bolsheviks, except two, and the remainder of the house has been turned into a branch of the Foreign Office for propaganda. Their money has, of course, been confiscated and they are at their wits' end to know what to do, whether in fact to leave the country or to stay and await developments. Hetvany formerly owned a paper, which was a strong supporter of Michael Karolyi. His paper has since been communized and taken over by the Government, and he must now act as a humble contributor to his own journal, or to any other paper to which the Soviet Government may relegate his literary efforts. His diet and that of his wife depends on the quality of the articles he is able to produce in favour

of Bolshevism. For instance, all writers in Hungary are classified into three categories, 1, 2, and 3, and they receive a diet, not according to their literary abilities, but according to how much ardour they are able to put into their praise of the Soviet Government and the doctrines of Bolshevism. Thus, should we ever have Bolshevism in England, H. G. Wells would have little difficulty in qualifying for a No. 1 diet, whereas poor Galsworthy, with his love of writing up the patricians, would starve on a very disagreeable No. 3, consisting of stale bread, mouldy potatoes and cabbage water, very different from what his readers are accustomed to find in the great homes of his literary puppets. The lot of the writers of Society columns and personal notes would be pitiful in the extreme.

Hetvany, like so many others, finds himself in a difficult position. But being unable to leave the country, he feels it wiser to bow before the storm, hoping for a change in the future. I left him racking his brains out to produce an article worthy of a No. 1 diet. These honest men must perjure their souls in order to fill their stomachs.

I returned to the hotel, hoping to find that young Zichy had been released, but the hours rolled by and nothing happened. At four o'clock I took Goldman and drove up to see Agoston, the Deputy People's Commissary for Foreign Affairs. He was not in, but I learnt he would be present at the sitting of the Soviet Council in the afternoon. We caught him there. Agoston is an intellectual Bolshevik, and was formerly a University Professor. He is not a Jew, and is of an immeasurably superior type to the majority of his colleagues, speaking several foreign languages. It is impossible to believe that a man of this stamp really believes in Bolshevism, but once again it seems to be the case of one with political ambitions, who sees no chance of playing any rôle except by throwing in his lot with the extremists. I explained the object of my visit.

Agoston then left the room and returned in a few



minutes saying: "It is quite all right; your friend will be released within an hour." Delighted with this cheerful news, I returned to the hotel to dine and to announce the news to Zichy's friends.

In the evening, a man, somewhat the worse for drink, came to see me, bringing a scribbled note from Zichy, thanking me for what I had done. The stranger explained that he had been locked up with Zichy in the same cell on the previous night, also charged with drinking. I asked him why he had been released. He replied: "They recognize me as a chronic alcoholic and I have a doctor's certificate authorizing me to drink." But the evening passed, and in spite of the promises of Böehm and Agoston, Zichy failed to appear, and I began to fear the Government had broken its word, or else that they had raked up some fresh charge against him.

*Tuesday, April 15th.* There was no news of Zichy this morning, so I decided to make further representations to the Government in the afternoon. The Bolshevists have been indulging in their favourite game of propaganda, by taking Brialsford, the Socialist, and some others for a tour of inspection in the country, personally conducted by Hamburger, the Minister of Agriculture. They have been shown some large estates worked by the Soviet Government as proof of their model methods of agriculture. As a matter of fact, these estates have been taken over bodily by the Soviet Government from their legitimate owners, and all the credit for their organization of course belongs to their former proprietors. Brialsford can see nothing wrong with Bolshevism, in fact he declared at dinner that he considered it an almost ideal form of government. He ignores all the extortion, confiscation, imprisonment and tyranny which is turning the life of all classes into a hell upon earth. I do not see, moreover, how he reconciles his own ideals with those of the Bolshevists. Where is his beloved freedom of the Press? It is indeed remarkable what propaganda can do, even amongst intelligent men!

BRAILSFORD

BRAILSFORD



After lunch I was just starting off to make a fresh effort to secure Zichy's release, when that gentleman himself walked into my room, having just been set free. He was taken before the Revolutionary Tribunal, fearing the worst, and his case was tried, but evidently acting on instructions received from a higher quarter, his judges, consisting of three commissaries, let him off with a caution. But he admits that but for my intervention he would have remained indefinitely in prison. He was about to be released on the previous day, according to the promises made by Agoston and Böehm, when some official interfered on the ground that serious political charges would be brought against him. Young Zichy has had enough of Budapest and Bolshevism. His health has been sadly shattered by three nights in a Bolshevist cell, and his sole ambition is to get away as quickly as possible. But the Soviet will not give him a pass.

This afternoon the special train left to convey Entente subjects and neutrals from Budapest to Vienna. Almost all foreigners seized the opportunity to leave. I was informed at the last minute that the Soviet Government has succeeded in putting three agents, with passes for England, on the train. One of these gentlemen was pointed out to me on the platform. I took care to inform the proper authorities. I am now almost the last Englishman left in Budapest, except for Macartney.

*Wednesday, April 16th.* Early this morning I drove out with Zichy to the golf course. On the previous night he had expressed a great desire to have a little fresh air in the country, after three days in the Bolshevist gaol. It is a lovely drive, but on our arrival we found the Club absolutely deserted, except for one old green attendant, and the still older mare who drags the rollers round the course. The green-keeper came up with the tears streaming down his face, and announced that a Soviet Commission had visited the Club on the previous day and had forbidden anyone to play on the course under a penalty

of ten years' imprisonment and a fine of fifty thousand crowns. The course, they said, would now be ploughed up, and potatoes sown on it for the benefit of the proletariat. It had been misused too long. Poor Zichy was in despair at the sudden curtailment of our plans. I said to him: "The commissaries have gone away; they will not come back to-day, and no-one will know if we have a game or not."

"That is all very well for you," he replied, "the penalties do not apply to you, but if I am caught, they will most certainly put me in prison again, and this time it will not be so easy for me to get out."

I reassured him, and finally his sporting instincts got the better of his legitimate fears, and he agreed on the match on condition that the old green-keeper kept a watch on the high road and gave us ample warning if a body of "Comrades," belonging to the Anti-Golfers' Union should be seen approaching.

It having been decided to plough up the course immediately, we agreed that as this would probably be the final game ever played, the match, to be a fitting one, must be for the Soviet Championship of Hungary, and that the loser should present the winner with a silver cup, suitably inscribed. This championship cannot be said to have been played under conditions such as would have met with the approval of the Royal and Ancient Committee. There was no referee, no spectators, no caddies, no flags—in their place old sticks stuck in the holes to mark their position—and the grass on the fairway had not been cut for a long time, but the old mare had eaten her way steadily round the nine holes, leaving a narrow lane where the lies were not too bad. The balls belonged to the pre-war period, and had been played with over and over again. I had no clubs and had to borrow a set taken from the Club House. Their legitimate owner, whoever he may be, was probably in prison, or an exile in Austria. It was under these unfavourable conditions that we set out

to play our historic match for the championship of Soviet Hungary.

Now I cannot describe myself as a first-class golfer. I carry, it is true, every shot in my bag, but they will insist upon remaining there and seldom, if ever, actually make their appearance on the course. Zichy, on the other hand, is a player of considerable skill, who, under normal conditions, could certainly have conceded me a half. But the race is not always to the strong. My opponent, who played well through the greens, was quite off his game when it came to putting. Try as he would, he could not induce the ball to go near the hole. His nerves had been shattered by being chased around Budapest like a hunted criminal for weeks, and by three nights spent in a darksome cell. Every time he approached the hole, he saw not only the narrow, elusive entrance, but the much bigger one to another cell with the words "Ten years' hard" and "Fifty thousand crowns fine"! These penalties, presumably not applying to a foreigner, made no impression on my steadiness. At the turn I was in the fairly safe position of being three up. On the way home, Zichy won back two holes, and looked like making a fine finish, but at the critical moment I was saved by his failing nerve, and won by three up and two to play, thus becoming the winner of the only championship ever played in any country under a Bolshevist Government.

*Thursday, April 17th.* In the afternoon Miss Eleanora Wood, a beautiful English girl who came to Hungary nine years ago and has lived there ever since, came to see me. She might have left the country before, after the first revolution, and now she bitterly regrets not having done so. All her money and jewellery are buried in the country on an estate near Raab. She came to see if I could help her to get away and to save her valuables. We discussed a plan that might succeed, but agreed to await a few days and see what developed.

*Friday, April 18th.* At an early hour this morning I



was informed by Osborne, a U.S.A. officer attached to Professor Browne's mission, that there had been an outbreak in Vienna on the previous night of a most serious nature. The Hungarian papers came out with the most glaring and exaggerated accounts of this affair. They stated that the Houses of Parliament had been set on fire, and that in the subsequent fighting, many people had been killed and wounded. Everywhere it was declared that the Communists were gaining ground and that shortly a Soviet Government would be established in Vienna. This news decided me to change my plans, and to leave the same evening, as if grave events happened in Vienna, and Macartney away, there would be no one to send cables to the "Daily Telegraph" and the "Times."

I was also influenced in this decision by other considerations. I had received many hints that it was highly undesirable for me to remain any longer in Budapest, as my presence was daily becoming more and more distasteful to the authorities. I was privately informed that although the Soviet Government might not care to arrest a citizen of an Entente country, there were plenty of other ways of getting rid of those who opposed the Government, and if I valued my life, I should leave at once. In this plan I was influenced by finding that Professor Browne, who had been recalled by his Government, would also be leaving the same evening. The ever-friendly Zerkovitch, who had for some time past been begging me to leave at once, undertook to secure me a seat on the train.

We reached the station about twenty minutes before the start of the train to find it absolutely packed. Not only were the corridors so full that it was impossible to enter, but hundreds of people were sitting on the top of the carriages. The train services in Hungary have been almost suspended, owing to fuel shortage, scarcity of rolling-stock, and the general disorder produced by the Bolsheviks. This is the only through train to the frontier, and as it stops at every intermediate station, the peasants



seize the chance of returning to their homes. How on earth they manage to stay on those roofs on such icy-cold nights surpasses the imagination, but they are a hardy race and do not seem to mind discomforts. As it is, there are a great many minor accidents through people falling off when the train is in motion, and occasionally some are killed by not noticing the approach of a tunnel or bridge. But under Bolshevism such incidents amount to little or nothing, and are regarded as part of the day's natural risks.

When Browne, Goldman and myself reached our reserved compartment, we found it was already appropriated, and nothing would induce the occupants to leave. It looked as if we would have to stand up all night, but finally a body of Red Guards, on duty at the station, drove out the usurpers at the point of the bayonet, and we settled ourselves down for the night, filling the spare places with as many women as we could crowd in. By the time we started, Professor Browne was thoroughly weary and fed-up with Hungary, Bolshevism, and everything in Europe, including President Wilson. One by one he had seen his illusions disappear into thin air, and the hopes he had placed on the good-will and integrity of the Bolshevik leaders vanish. Settling himself into a corner he said: "Ashmead-Bartlett, I am leaving for America, and I shall never return to Europe again. I shall find some quiet little valley in Kentucky and spend the rest of my days amidst the flowers 'where the widows cease their worrying and the Bolshies are at rest.'" This was, of course, a reference to the number of ladies, especially the Baroness Bonamissa, who had worried the Professor's life out to help them escape from Budapest.

We passed the usual, uncomfortable night, such as only those who have travelled in a Soviet train can appreciate.

*Saturday, April 19th.* We did not reach Vienna until noon, owing to the delays on the frontier and the continual stoppages throughout the night. The Austrian Government is making vain efforts to check the steady flow

of Bolshevik agents to the capital, and this necessitates a prolonged examination of passports on the frontier. It is an utter farce, because any Bolshevik can slip across on foot where he wishes, and many go into Vienna as reputed messengers to the Embassy.

Instead of finding Vienna in flames, I found the town absolutely quiet. Macartney came to see me and declared the outbreak on Thursday had been grossly exaggerated. The whole agitation was not a concerted movement of the starving populace, but the work of a comparatively few Hungarians and Russian agitators. Some six people were killed, and a few dozen wounded. One policeman had his horse shot. As it lay wounded on the ground, the starving mob fell upon it and literally hacked it to pieces, carrying the bleeding remains home as a welcome addition to their slender suppers.

One notable death, showing the changes in the times, occurred this day, and deserves a special mention. In the Prada (Park) were formerly a number of swans, but all had disappeared during the war, except one aged grandfather known to the oldest inhabitants of Vienna, whose age remains a mystery to this day, though he is reputed to have fed from the hand of Maria Theresa. Out of respect for his venerable years, or possibly through the toughness of his flesh, he had been allowed to remain unmolested by a starving population. On the morning after this "émeute" a few feathers were found in the Park, and the old King of Swans was never seen again. No one knows his fate, but there is little doubt that in the tumult some "Comrade," unable longer to withstand the temptation, wrung his neck, and that that evening some family in Vienna had a square meal of "Swan à la Maria Theresa"!

## CHAPTER IX

### THE COUNTER-REVOLUTIONISTS

*Sunday, April 20th.* We were promised a fresh demonstration for to-day, but nothing happened. The weather is beautifully fine, and this is a most important factor in keeping a Viennese mob in a good humour. Huge crowds parade the streets, but as sightseers, not agitators. The newly-formed Volkswehr held the Houses of Parliament in great strength with machine-gun detachments, and, together with the regular police, preserved order in the streets. At lunch I met Pallavicini, George Karolyi and Hohenlohe, and was put "au courant" with what had passed in Counter-Revolutionary circles since my departure. Apparently very little has been done, apart from all parties talking and fighting amongst themselves. The main difficulty is the question of finance, as no one has any money. There are some two hundred and fifty Hungarian officers hiding in Vienna, or lying very low; as Bela Kuhn is pressing Bauer to expel them from the country. They might be used to organize the peasants in Western Hungary, if only the venture could be financed. How can some money be raised? That is the main difficulty.

The air is full of rumours from Budapest about the expected fall of the Government. They owe their conception to the advance of the Rumanians in Eastern Hungary, which is causing the Bolsheviks the utmost alarm. This advance is said to be an independent move on the part of the Rumanians, and has not been authorized by the Entente, according to Cunninghame.

*Tuesday, April 22nd.* It is freely reported that there

has been a counter-revolution against the Government, followed by much looting and bloodshed. No one knows the truth. Pallavicini and Teleki came to dine privately with me, and we had a long talk about the whole situation, discussing in great detail every alternative plan of campaign. Cunninghame is in favour of a rising in the mountains of Western Hungary, because our slender forces could defend themselves there against any troops the Soviet might send to suppress them. The peasants are known to be extremely hostile to the Bolsheviks. But there are grave objections to such a course because we would have to cross the Austrian frontier with a large force, which might lead to a clash with the Austrian Volkswehr, and the Austrian Government might then arrest all the leaders left in Vienna.

We finally came to the conclusion that a concentration of all the counter-revolutionary officers and troops at Szeged in Southern Hungary would offer the greatest menace to Bolshevism, and the best chance of success. Szeged is in the Armistice zone, and is at present occupied by a Division of French Colonial troops. The objection to this plan is the unknown attitude of the French towards the counter-revolutionary party. If the French remain friendly, the presence of their troops in Szeged would enable a concentration to take place under their protection, and the Whites would not be dispersed before they could concentrate in sufficient numbers to beat off a Red attack. We agreed to call a meeting of all the leaders for to-morrow, and that meanwhile we should draw up a plan of campaign to be submitted to the gathering.

*Wednesday, April 23rd.* The meeting took place in my rooms at 2.30, when there assembled all the Hungarian leaders now in Vienna—Counts Teleki, Bethlen, Pallavicini, Sigray, Palfy, Hohenlohe, Grunenburg from Prague, Szmresanvi, and several others. Every political party was represented, and many who had been bitterly hostile in the past were meeting on common ground for the first time.



Bethlen was elected Chairman. Now the trouble with all Hungarians is their innate, insatiable love of party politics. Politics are the very breath of life to them, whether they be counts or peasants. They are a nation of speech-makers, and the real issues are generally obscured by numerous petty points in dispute between the various parties. This national trait became painfully evident during our efforts to organize a united party against Bolshevism in Vienna. No sooner were the various leaders assembled together than the old feuds at once came to the front, and often threatened to break up the meetings. Although the only real issue was to drive out the Soviet Government and to establish a Constitutional Government in its place, the former dislikes of the politicians for one another frequently led to violent quarrels and jealousies.

At this meeting of all the party leaders in the old Bristol Hotel, which was to decide the future of the Counter-Revolution, it was extremely difficult to get down to real business. Finally, all agreed to sink their likes and dislikes and former political prejudices, and to discuss the alternative plans put forward. After the meeting had lasted for two hours and a half, it was unanimously agreed to make the main concentration at Szeged, as reports had been received that the French General in command could be relied on, if not to assist, at least to remain neutral. At the same time, Sigray and Szmresanyi were delegated to make a diversion in Western Hungary, where they possessed great influence with the peasants. When the meeting broke up, we felt for the first time we had made some definite progress and that we were at length drifting from the realm of discussion into the healthier one of action.

During the Counter-Revolution, a favourite rendezvous of the leaders was Madame Sacher's restaurant. Old-fashioned and small with an excellent cuisine, this hotel is world-famous. During Bolshevism, it became a haven of refuge for the exiled, for no more ardent supporter of the old Monarchy exists than Madame Sacher. She hates

Republics and Soviets whole-heartedly and supported the reactionaries in every way in her power. Her establishment was regarded with an unfavourable eye by the Government of Bauer and Deutsch, and she was subjected to many petty persecutions for keeping open after time, etc., but her loyalty never changed. Madame Sacher refused to bow before the revolutionary storm, and never altered her belief that the old order would return. Many an exiled Royalist owes her a debt of gratitude. Arriving in Vienna, as the majority did, without money and without even clothes—except those they stood up in—she allowed them to live in the hotel for long periods on credit, relying on their promises to repay when the storm clouds rolled by. Sacher's is peculiar in its interior economy, and is an ideal rendezvous for plotters. There are some dozen "salles privées" where friends could meet and talk in private without being overheard, while Wagner, the head-waiter, kept a watchful eye on all doubtful intruders. Every evening groups of exiles met in these small rooms and discussed, without fear of interruption, their plans for the overthrow of Bolshevism. No Bolshevik was ever seen in Sacher's. If doubtful persons attempted to obtain tables, they were politely but firmly informed that none were available. Sacher's became, in fact, a hot-bed of the Counter-Revolutionists.

*Thursday, April 24th.* I went to the Embassy this morning and had a long talk with Cunninghame, disclosing to him all our plans. He has promised every assistance and support, but urges us to get started on something without delay. What the Counter-Revolution requires is money to finance it, and a special train to convey three hundred officers from Vienna to Szeged. I spoke to Cunninghame of these difficulties and he said he would endeavour to arrange about a train. He pointed out that the great obstacle would be to obtain the permission of the Serbian Government for the train to pass through their territory.

*Friday, April 25th.* I went and had a further talk with Cunninghame. He agreed to see the Serbian Minister to-day and also to approach Louis Rothschild, with a view to obtaining a loan from him for the Counter-Revolution. We all arranged to meet at Sacher's in a private room in the evening, when Cunninghame would tell us how far he had been successful in his efforts. In the evening there assembled at Sacher's, Pallavicini, the Cunninghames, the Orssichs, George Festetich, Countess Caya Andrassy and Sigray. Cunninghame informed us that the Serbian Minister would have nothing to do with the matter of a special train passing through Serbian territory, as the Serbian Government is much more frightened of a Royalist Party in Budapest than of the Soviet Government. Cunninghame had also been unsuccessful in his efforts with Louis Rothschild, who was too frightened of the attitude of the Austrian Government to lend any money for the furtherance of our schemes. This news threw our party into the greatest gloom. However, a good dinner and some excellent wine did much to improve the spirits of all, and we sat up to a very late hour making fresh plans. We decided to approach Mr. Karpeles, the able head of the firm of Schenkers, with a view to obtaining a train through his firm.

*Saturday, April 26th.* This morning I went round to see Mr. Karpeles to endeavour to arrange the matter of the special train. After I had explained the whole matter, he said it might be arranged, but that it would be necessary to take an Austrian State Official into his confidence. We gave our consent. The kind-hearted Austrian, a keen supporter of the old régime, declared he would be delighted to let us have a train within twenty-four hours, if only we could invent some legitimate reason for its use. The following plan was then devised. I was requested to see the Rumanian Minister and ask him to apply for a special train to take back repatriated Rumanians from Vienna. This could be done through

his representative on the Joint International Traffic Board.

In the afternoon I went to see Cunninghame and told him about the plan for obtaining a train through the Rumanian Minister. He raised no objection. Then I went on to the Rumanian Embassy and saw the Minister, remaining with him some two hours and a half. At first he was very much on his guard, but I soon induced him to talk, and then we made excellent progress. I learnt that the first advance of the Rumanians into Hungary was quite unauthorised by the Entente, and was merely a return of the old Rumanian habit of taking advantage of other people's misfortunes, as they did against Bulgaria in 1913, and against the Central Powers in 1916. Now, however, the French General Staff have become jealous of an independent Rumanian campaign and with the consent of the "Big Four" have taken charge of the operations themselves. Gradually I approached the object of my visit. I pointed out how essential it was for the Rumanians to appear to be advancing into Hungary with an anti-Bolshevist party co-operating with them, so that they should not be faced with the possibility of a national war. The Rumanian Minister saw the strength of this argument and realized that it might offer certain advantages to march in conjunction with the Hungarian Counter-Revolutionary movement. He said, however, that he could not act in such a grave matter on his own responsibility, without consulting his Government. He expressed a wish to meet some of the leaders of the movement with his Military Attaché on the following day, at 11 a.m. The upshot of this long interview was no train, but I succeeded in learning almost everything about the Rumanian plans. They wished to hold the line of the river Tisza as their permanent boundary.

On returning to the hotel, I found Pallavicini in a great state of agitation. There are rumours that his wife has fallen into the hands of the Bolshevists, and has been imprisoned by them. He is afraid she will be held as a



hostage, as Pallavicini is well-known to the Bolshevists as one of the leading spirits in the Counter-Revolution. This news, if true, is very grave indeed.

I had a conference in the evening with Sigray, Paul Teleki, and Szmresanyi in a private room at Sacher's, to discuss the new situation created by the difficulty of obtaining a train and the necessary permit to pass through Serbian territory. In view of this, it may be necessary to make the Western the principal front. Sigray is in favour of this plan and so is Szmresanyi, believing they can control the peasants. Sigray has, in fact, been appointed the leader of this sector, with the somewhat high-sounding title—in view of the poverty of the resources at our command—of "Commander-in-Chief of all the forces on the Western Front."

*Sunday, April 27th.* There was a meeting early this morning in my room, the upshot of which was that Pallavicini and Szmresanyi were nominated to visit the Rumanian Minister as he had requested on the previous day.

The Austrian Government, or certain members of it, are showing themselves hostile to the presence of the Counter-Revolutionists in Vienna, and it is rumoured that they are shortly to be expelled from the country, or else interned. Such a step would be fatal to our plans. The constant meetings at Sacher's, and at my rooms at the Bristol, are fully known to the Bolshevik agents in Vienna, and Bela Kuhn is bringing the utmost pressure to have these organizations broken up. It has therefore been decided to hold all meetings, in which more than two or three persons are involved, at a secret rendezvous. This afternoon I attended a meeting of the entire party in a house in an obscure street. Many matters were discussed, and the appointment of Sigray as Commander-in-Chief, together with the determination to make an attack on the Western Front, were confirmed.

Dined at Sacher's with Pallavicini and Caya Andrassy.

The former is very much upset on account of the absence of all reliable news about his wife. The latest reports say she was captured at Raab (Gyor) on her way from Budapest, but no one knows what she could have been doing in the capital when she might have remained in the country in comparative safety. Now Pallavicini thinks she has been imprisoned in Budapest. He fears she may be tried on account of his well-known activity in Vienna.

*Monday, April 28th.* For several days past the rumours floating round Vienna about Budapest have transcended the intranscendable. No one has come through with any reliable information as to what is taking place in the town. It is said, however, that the Bolshevists are preparing a great ceremony for Labour Day, May 1st, that they are decorating the entire town red, and are erecting a number of gallows on all the bridges, as they intend to hang the greater number of their political opponents, now in custody, on the morning of May 1st. I do not believe these rumours, as it is almost incredible they should take such a step just at the moment when they are doing their utmost to secure recognition from Europe. Also, Freeman must have heard of the matter and would have made representations by now. Yet it is firmly believed in Vienna that this execution "en masse" is to take place, and all those with friends and relatives left in the city are terrified.

Just before dinner I received a hurried note from Caya Andrassy, saying that Count Salim had arrived that morning from Budapest, bringing the certain information that the Bolshevists are erecting gallows on the bridges and intend hanging the prisoners on Labour Day. She begged me to take some steps to try and save the unfortunate ones. Still not believing this news, I hastened off to see Professor Goulliche, the U.S.A. representative in Vienna. He told me he could not believe the news and would telephone through to Budapest to his representative there. The latter put an entirely different construction on the story and said they were merely erecting the scaffold-

ing for the decorations, which seems much more likely to be the truth.

*Tuesday, April 29th.* The Counter-Revolutionists passed another wretched day, full of doubts and uncertainty. All our efforts to raise money end in failure. Every rich person in Vienna is afraid to lend, lest such an act should reach the ears of the semi-Bolshevist Austrian Government. Louis Rothschild, who might do so much, is afraid of his own shadow, and raises every possible difficulty. He wishes the leaders of the movement to mortgage their estates as security. If this can be arranged, he may or may not be induced to advance five million crowns, which is only, after all, a drop in the ocean.

In the evening Bethlen sent me round the new political programme of all the Coalition Parties now assembled in Vienna, which is to be sent to the Entente representatives in Bucharest and thus, if they decide to occupy Budapest, they will know exactly what parties to call upon to form a Government. I sent this document on, through Cunningham, to General Greenly, the British representative at Bucharest. Dined at Sacher's with Pallavicini and others. All were much depressed at the unfavourable turn events seem to be taking. In the middle of the evening, Pallavicini was rung up with the news that his wife was safe for the moment at his country place at Danisfa, and had not been imprisoned after all. This news was enough to dissipate the gloom of the party and to raise the spirits of all.

*Wednesday, April 30th.* Another profitless day passed in vain efforts trying to raise money for the Counter-Revolution, but they all excuse themselves on various grounds. The deepest gloom and depression is written on the faces of all the leaders. Now that things are going badly, they are splitting into hostile groups once again. The old jealousies have arisen as to who shall be in the new ministry when it is formed. I have, however, induced

them to form a Central Committee with full powers to issue orders.

News has been received that the Soviet Government is determined to make a great effort to convert the Viennese to Bolshevism. We have learnt through our secret agents that they are sending enormous sums of money for this purpose into Vienna, so that when the right moment comes to strike, the attempt will not end in the miserable fiasco of April 12th. It is obvious that Bela Kuhn must, in the long run, convert other countries to Bolshevism, if he intends to remain in power himself. If he does not, Hungary will be cut off from all intercourse with her neighbours, and the resulting economic ruin will bring about the downfall of the Soviet. If he can convert Austria, why, then he is free to continue his propaganda as per programme in Italy, Czecho-Slovakia and Germany. Bolshevism is like a huge fire; fresh material must constantly be found to heap on the blaze, otherwise it will consume itself and end in smoke and ashes. Therefore Vienna is the crux of the situation for the Soviet leaders in Budapest. If they can capture Vienna, they will have added immensely to their power, prestige and influence, and they will break up with one blow all the hostile parties which are now organizing in the Austrian capital. Sigray was the first to obtain certain information through his agents of the huge sums of money which have been sent from Budapest to the Hungarian Embassy in Vienna for propaganda purposes amongst the Austrian Volkswehr. It will be fatal to the Counter-Revolution if this blow against Austria is not checkmated at the start. It is even rumoured that there will be a serious outbreak to-morrow, Labour Day, but this would seem to be premature, as the plans of the Bolsheviks for the capture or conversion of Vienna can hardly be so far advanced.

*May 1st, Labour Day.* The disturbances promised for to-day as usual failed to materialize. As so often happens in Vienna, the majority of the people turned out into the



streets to watch the catastrophe, so there was only a small section of the population left to create a riot or revolution. The mass of the Viennese are too calm and apathetic and good-natured to indulge in sudden orgies of discontent and bloodshed, and the imported Communists are too frightened by the determined attitude of the Volkswehr.

It had been agreed on the previous day that I should see Schumpeter, the Austrian Minister of Finance, and endeavour to arrange a loan for the Counter-Revolution from him. Schumpeter is a young man, still in the thirties, of great intelligence who has spent many years in America, and speaks English perfectly. We discussed the future of Austria. He is bitterly opposed to the "Anschluss," the proposed union with Germany. Schumpeter is not even a Socialist or Republican. I speedily discovered that he is quite out of sympathy with Deutsch and Bauer, and wishes to see a moderate constitutional régime established in both Austria and Hungary. Having found the ground so favourably prepared, I was able to approach the real object of my visit—the raising of funds for the Counter-Revolution. There was no need to be cautious or to indulge in half-measures. Schumpeter declared without reserve that all his sympathies were with us, and that the only way to eliminate the Red danger from Vienna was to drive the Soviet Government out of Hungary. I then explained the great difficulties we were experiencing, and of the obstacles that Louis Rothschild was putting in our way Schumpeter was most sympathetic and replied: "Had I not got to account for the money afterwards to Parliament, I would willingly advance it myself from the Austrian Treasury." He then suggested a more practical scheme. He undertook to see Louis Rothschild and to tell him he could withdraw ten millions from the banks without any questions being asked by the Treasury. This was good news, indeed, as it did away with Louis Rothschild's main objection to lending financial support, namely, his fear of

being asked awkward questions by the Austrian Government.

I left Schumpeter, feeling more confident than I had been for a long time past, and returned to lunch at Sacher's with Pallavicini, Sigray and Teleki, to whom I communicated the good news. They were, of course, delighted, and decided to send a fresh deputation to Rothschild this afternoon. The active agent of the Counter-Revolutionists is Boroviczeny, a young Hungarian who greatly distinguished himself for his personal bravery in the war. He is the intermediary in all transactions between the Hungarians and the Austrians, as he belongs to the old joint Foreign Office, which has not yet been wound up. His services throughout the whole of this period were invaluable to all parties. He was also acting as the confidential agent of the Emperor Karl, and was therefore selected to visit Rothschild with Schumpeter's proposal for raising money. In the evening we all met once again at Sacher's, in the most advanced state of expectancy and hope, only to have our optimism dashed to the ground by Boroviczeny's return with the news that Louis Rothschild was continually raising fresh difficulties. He added, however, that he had promised to give a decision on the following day.

## CHAPTER X

### STRANGE EVENTS IN VIENNA

*Friday, May 2nd.* This has been a most extraordinary day. The leaders of the Counter-Revolution awoke feeling very depressed at their failure to make any real progress with their plans through lack of money, for we know that unless money is forthcoming, the Hungarian elements in Vienna will disintegrate.

At 9.30 a.m. the ever-energetic Boroviczeny called to see me, and to explain the course of the negotiations with Louis Rothschild. "The latter," he said, "appears willing to lend some money on certain conditions, namely, that he should pay it to a certain Austrian firm of bankers, who would give him their guarantee, and they in return should receive as security for the loan, mortgages on some of the big Austrian and Hungarian Estates, like Schonborn's and Pallavicini's."

Boroviczeny said further that Count Schonborn was looking for intermediaries and wished to know whether I could name any. I thought of Mr. Karpeles and hurried off to see him. Mr. Karpeles was, as usual, very sympathetic and went fully into the matter with his general manager. He then said in the most sporting and generous manner, that he had a million at call in the bank which he would be quite willing to lend. Armed with this welcome intelligence, Boroviczeny hurried off to see Rothschild, while I went to see Cunninghame. On reporting progress to him, he advised us to do nothing in a hurry, but to raise money and then quietly to await developments.

Schumpeter, the Austrian Finance Minister, Sigray, and Pallavicini came to lunch with me at Sacher's. Schumpeter, in spite of his official position, entered fully into our plans, gave us some excellent advice, and also promised to help to raise money by any means in his power. In the middle of lunch, Boroviczeny came in, but had nothing to add except that he had a further appointment with Louis Rothschild at 3 p.m. We then induced Schumpeter to send Rothschild a note telling him he could safely lend us money as he would guarantee him the repayment of it from the Treasury. Then, for the first time, we felt we were in a fair way of raising the necessary funds. Cunninghame also appeared and was surprised to find Schumpeter taking part in our deliberations.

After lunch, Sigray took me aside to discuss a new plan which it was proposed to put into operation as a last desperate resource. This was to obtain possession of the large sums of money sent by the Bolshevist leaders from Budapest to the Embassy in the Bankgasse, either for the purpose of propaganda or to enable the Bolshevist leaders to live in opulence in the event of their being forced to flee from Hungary. It was certain that all this money—for no one knew at this time how much had been sent to Vienna—had been stolen out of the State funds, or else from private accounts at the banks, and the Counter-Revolutionists had as much right to it as the Bolshevist leaders. Information had been received that the Bolshevist Ambassador, Bulgar, and the majority of the Embassy staff, had left for Budapest for a consultation with Bela Kuhn, taking with them most of their armed guards, and leaving the Embassy in the care of one of the under-secretaries, the door-keeper and the domestic staff.

We now discussed a plan for an armed party of the Hungarian officers to capture the Embassy and to search the building for the hidden treasure. The whole of the success of the enterprise would depend on keeping the matter secret from the Austrian Government, for the police



would in duty bound be obliged to protect the Embassy of a foreign country in the very heart of the capital. We discussed every detail of the proposed plan and decided that the attempt must be made this very night, while Dr. Bulgar and his staff were absent,—as it would be difficult to keep the matter a secret if it were longer delayed. Sigray was quite certain the money was in the Bankgasse, but its hiding-place was unknown. He undertook to organize his band of officers who were to form the forlorn hope.

At 3 p.m. there was a final meeting at the Josephplatz of all the leaders. Bethlen, Pallavicini, Teleki, Szmre-sanyi, Bathanyi, Sigray and many others all attended. Boroviczeny came in to announce the result of his negotiations with Louis Rothschild. The latter was not yet satisfied with his guarantees and refused to lend any money until he had seen Schonborn and young Ali Pallavicini.

At 5 p.m. Sigray told me he did not think the "coup" against the Embassy could be managed this evening. It was known through an agent, who had been bribed, exactly where the money was hidden, but the latter was showing signs of nerves, and was either afraid or wished to make better terms for himself. I returned to the hotel to await further news.

At 6.30 I was disturbed by the entrance of Boroviczeny, who came to tell me what had passed in the course of the fresh negotiations with Louis Rothschild. The latter had finally promised to lend one million crowns, provided that Count Schonborn and Mr. Karpeles agreed to do the same, and the latter had at once consented. This meant that after all our trouble, we would obtain three millions of crowns, a paltry sum indeed with which to finance a Counter-Revolution. Then, Boroviczeny added, a strange thing happened, which he himself was quite unable to understand or explain. Just when the negotiations were being concluded, Schumpeter's secretary came in and said: "I have a message from Mr. Schumpeter for Baron

Rothschild. There is no need for him to advance any money, as it has been raised elsewhere."

I knew what this meant, but said nothing. I then went to a private room at Sacher's to dine, taking Boroviczeny with me, and we were joined by Pallavicini and Szamre-sanyi. A few minutes later Sigray arrived, beaming all over, with the glorious news that the two bags containing the money had been safely extracted from the Embassy, having been handed over by the agent inside. This news threw everyone into the wildest state of excitement, and we sent for champagne to celebrate the occasion. One by one the conspirators came in with the latest reports. The Embassy itself was occupied by fifty officers at 8 p.m.; right under the eyes of the Austrian police, who had not attempted to interfere. The Secretary of the Embassy, Dr. Barlint, had already been seized and placed under guard. Once inside the Embassy, which was Hungarian territory, the Austrian Police were unable to interfere, as they would be guilty of a breach of neutrality, but they could form a strong cordon round the building and prevent anyone from entering or leaving. Barlint, the captured Secretary, disclosed to the Hungarian officers that although Dr. Bulgar and his family, together with another Secretary called Fenroy, had left for Budapest, they were expected back again at any moment. They had refused to allow themselves to be examined at the frontier, and in consequence had been turned back by the Austrian police. This unforeseen circumstance greatly complicated the difficulties of the raiders, now in full possession of the Legation. Hours were required in which to make a minute search of the archives to secure all papers, secret documents, etc., and if Bulgar and his family and friends arrived in the middle of these proceedings, they might give the alarm to the police.

It was evident from the conflicting reports which reached us that the utmost confusion prevailed in the Bankgasse,

as there was no one in authority and an alarm might be given any minute. At ten o'clock, young Palfy came in looking wilder than ever. He announced they were expecting a counter-attack from the Bolsheviks in Vienna, and were very short of weapons. He begged me to lend him my two automatic pistols. I had left them at the Hotel Bristol and went to fetch them. When I returned, I found the party at Sacher's even more excited and drinking heavily.

Every minute, fresh officers came in, bringing the most conflicting reports from the Bankgasse. Sigray and Pallavicini were in despair. They dared not go there themselves, because they were too well-known to the Viennese police, and they had to remain at Sacher's to give orders. They therefore begged me to go down to the Embassy and take charge. They were afraid, they said, that in the general confusion the money would be lost, stolen, or carried away by some of their irresponsible followers, and asked me to secure it at all costs. Young Boroviczeny offered to accompany me as interpreter, and just after ten we left Sacher's, and made our way unobserved to the Bankgasse. The streets were almost deserted, and the police on duty seemed to have no inkling of the strange drama which was being enacted under their eyes. On giving the counter-sign, we were admitted to the Embassy by an armed guard, and the door was immediately fastened behind our backs.

I shall never forget the scene which greeted us inside. In a large room upstairs were gathered some forty or fifty counter-revolutionary officers, arrayed in every conceivable costume, from old uniforms to working-men's clothes—in any garment in fact in which they had succeeded in escaping from Hungary. They were without a leader, and all were talking and shouting at the same time, having no idea what to do, or what would be the next move in the game. Some were armed with revolvers, some with swords, and others with thick cudgels. Their very appearance was suffi-



cient to strike terror into the heart of every Bolshevik in Hungary. It was apparent to me they were out for revenge, and that blood would be spilt before the evening was over, unless they could be got in hand. When I announced, through Boroviczeny, that I had come down to take charge, they accepted my leadership without the smallest demur, being apparently only too pleased to have someone to take over the command. It was my primary object to restore order and arrange a trap, so as to catch Dr. Bulgar and the rest of the Embassy Staff, on their return from the frontier station of Bruck. It was essential to hold them as hostages in view of possible reprisals being taken against the prisoners in Budapest. On the other hand, it was equally important to prevent any violence to the prisoners. This was likely to be difficult, as all the Hungarians were in a state of wild excitement—a large proportion being slightly “*non compos mentis*”—and it was almost impossible to keep them from shouting, yelling, and letting off their pistols. In fact, one would have thought there was sufficient noise to have aroused the dead from their graves. But the Austrian police made no sign.

The hours passed slowly by with no sign of the return of Bulgar and his companions. I organized several parties to make a systematic search of every room and every drawer for compromising papers which might be of use. But this work, in the general confusion, was badly carried out, and many important documents were overlooked.

At 1 a.m. we heard motor-cars coming down the Bankgasse; the first of them stopped before the building, and the occupants alighted. There was only one trusted servant left on duty in the hall, and he admitted the new arrivals through the gates and up the darkened stairs. The silence of the grave reigned over the building, for I had hidden all the Counter-Revolutionists in the adjoining rooms. One by one the weary, travel-stained voyagers arrived—Dr. Bulgar, Fenroy, Mrs. Barlint, two children



and two armed guards. They were looking eagerly forward to supper and to their beds, after two long dreary nights spent at Bruck. Then when their luggage had been brought upstairs they all assembled in one of the sitting-rooms. At this psychological moment, the signal was given.

From every doorway bounded armed Hungarians, mad for revenge. Of course there was no resistance. The men and the armed guards were seized and overcome, before they could use their rifles. I tremble to think what would have happened to the prisoners if I had not been there to exercise a restraining hand. The Hungarians are a savage race, and see "red" very easily. When one considers how these officers had seen their country ruined, their friends cast into prison, and they themselves driven into penniless exile, it is not surprising that they wished to be revenged in a summary manner on the authors of their many miseries. But Boroviczeny and myself, each armed with automatic pistols, stood over the prisoners and protected them from any violence, amidst perfect pandemonium, everyone yelling and talking at the top of his voice. I could only rely on about half-a-dozen amongst the fifty officers. I made them separate Mrs. Barlint and the two children, ordered that they should be treated with every courtesy and taken upstairs to bed, where they were given supper. Two armed guards were then placed in the passage, with instructions to allow no one to enter or molest them in any way.

The other prisoners were then brought into an inner room to be interrogated. I shall never forget the look of sheer terror on their faces. Finding themselves alone amidst their enemies, cut off from the outside world, and conscious of their own misdeeds, they all thought they would be immediately put to death. Their faces were deadly pale, the sweat poured down their cheeks, leaving long furrows amidst the dust from the motor journey.

When Dr. Bulgar saw me, his astonishment got the better of his fear, for the last time we had met was on General Smuts' train between Budapest and Vienna. They all made frantic appeals to me to save them. I told them the game was up, but that if they confessed everything their lives would be spared. I asked several questions of Bulgar, but he was too broken-down to answer coherently and begged to be allowed to repose until the morning.

No sooner had the prisoners been collected in one large room than pandemonium again broke out amongst the Counter-Revolutionists, who, having their hated enemies in their possession, proceeded to vent on them the pent-up feelings of months of wrongs. They wished to beat them and could only be stopped with the greatest difficulty. Everyone was talking and shouting and the row was so great that it seemed impossible not to arouse the whole of Vienna. I have never seen such a scene. There was a certain Count . . . who made such a noise and behaved so badly, being rather the worse for drink, that finally we threatened to lock him up with the Bolshevists. Young Palffy, his eyes ablaze, was wandering round with a pistol in each hand, poking them into the ribs of the prisoners. Finally, I was obliged to disarm him, as he had become a danger to friend and foe alike.

Barlint, one of the prisoners, asked if he could speak with me in private. I took him into a side room, when he said: "You have made a terrible mistake; I am not a Bolshevik. I have only stayed on here to assist the cause, as I thought I would be more useful here than elsewhere. Please ring up the British Embassy and ask about me."

I told him it was impossible, as all communications had been cut, and I added: "You will have to remain a prisoner until to-morrow morning, and then we will see what can be done with you."

It was not the intention of the Counter-Revolutionists to keep the prisoners in the Embassy, a more secure retreat

having been found for them in the vaults of a neighbouring Convent, where, under the careful supervision of the Mother Superior, and guarded by some officers, they could indulge in silent meditation, and be given the chance of returning to the true faith. Thus between 1 a.m. and 2 a.m. a motor-car might have been seen leaving the Embassy, and returning with almost suspicious regularity. On each occasion it bore away one of the victims, accompanied by four trusted officers, each armed with a Mauser pistol stuck into the ribs of the prisoners, who were told that at the least sound they would be shot on the spot. These removals were carried out right under the eyes of the Austrian police on duty in the street.

Now the mere fact that each of the guilty parties was taken away separately aroused their worst apprehensions, and they felt that the end was very near. Bulgar and Fenroy managed to conceal their feelings as they were led away, but Barlint broke down. As he was taken through the silent and deserted streets to his unknown destination, the tears rolled down his cheeks, and turning to his captors he exclaimed: "I know where you are taking me; it is to the Danube." As a matter of fact Barlint was not far out in his conjectures, because but for my presence and the fact that I was able to place trustworthy officers in charge of each prisoner, they would most certainly have been done in and thrown into the river, a plan which was suggested and advocated before me by the majority of the conspirators.

By 2 a.m. the Embassy was cleared of Bolsheviks, with the exception of Mrs. Barlint and her children. I paid them a farewell visit, assured them they had nothing to fear, and saw they were made comfortable for the night.

My next step was to secure the money which had been taken to a secret hiding-place. Leaving the Legation with Boroviczeny and two other officers, we drove to a remote street to an old antiquarian's shop where the bags containing the money had been deposited. Here we formally

took possession of it and proceeded to count the amount. We found that the spoils of war amounted to one hundred and thirty-five millions of Hungarian crowns and about three hundred thousand Swiss francs.

The counting having been completed and the receipts duly made out, we replaced the money in the bags and carried it to the waiting motor-car.

Fortunately, there was no one about the street and no suspicions were aroused. We decided that it would be too risky to drive up to the doors of the Bristol Hotel carrying the bags, and that it would be better for the car to drop me about 200 yards from the hotel, to make the remainder of the distance on foot. This was done, but I had forgotten the weight of all the paper money, and I found I could only proceed one step at a time, swinging a valise in either hand, and it took me ten minutes to travel the 200 yards to the hotel, which I reached at about 4.30 a.m. The old night-porter who let me in was very much astonished on seeing my baggage.

"What have you got there?" he asked.

I replied: "Oh, I have a lady friend, a Miss Wood, who has just escaped from the Bolsheviks, and she managed to bring out some of her belongings in these bags and I have promised to take care of them for her. Will you carry them upstairs to my room?"

When he felt their weight he said: "Isn't it astonishing what women can find to put in bags. My wife fills hers up like this whenever she travels."

I found Sigray and Pallavicini still waiting up, anxious to know whether I had succeeded in my mission, or not. Their joy was great when I was able to point to the two bags containing the results of our labours. I placed them under my bed, carefully locked the door, put a couple of pistols by my side, and then tried to sleep.

*Saturday, May 3rd.* I was roused at an early hour this morning by the entry of young Palfy, and he was quickly followed by many others who had been engaged in the



great "coup" of the evening before. I pointed out that it would look very suspicious if so many people kept coming to my room, and all but the immediate leaders were told to stay away from the hotel. Sigray, Pallavicini, and Szamresanyi then formally took possession of the 135 millions of crowns, on behalf of the Counter-Revolution party, and I was not sorry to get rid of the money and have the responsibility taken off my hands.

We read the papers eagerly, but could find no reference to the events of the evening before.

The capture of 135 million crowns has now placed the Counter-Revolutionists in possession of all the money necessary for carrying out their campaign against the Bolsheviks. However, I regret to have to record that this great success, instead of bringing the parties together, immediately led to internal dissensions and feuds breaking out with renewed violence. Each political party was anxious to obtain the exclusive possession of the funds which should have belonged to the Central Organization as a whole, and distributed as they were most needed.

In the evening it became generally known all over Vienna that something strange had happened the previous night at the Hungarian Embassy, and all sorts of rumours are afloat, but no one seems to have arrived at the truth.

*Sunday, May 4th.* This has been a trying day. On returning to the hotel I found that Pallavicini, Sigray and Szamresanyi had all been ordered before the police to explain their movements on the night of May 2nd. Not having been present they were able to reply that they knew nothing about the affair, and the police could not convict them of actually taking away the money. The Chief of Police then said: "But we know you three are the actual ringleaders of the Counter-Revolution in Vienna." Whereupon they replied: "Ah, that is another matter. We have too much important business on hand to concern ourselves with a little matter like the capture of 135 millions of crowns!" They told me that the police had been ex-

tremely polite and agreeable, and did not seem at all anxious to investigate the affair too closely, or to find the money, but had declared they were obliged to do something on account of the Government, as otherwise Messrs. Deutsch and Bauer would cause trouble.

But new difficulties are again floating round our heads, thanks to the strange "kinks" in the Hungarian character. After our success on the night of May 2nd, the Hungarian officers who had taken part in the raid should have immediately evacuated the Embassy, as there was no object in holding it any longer. But for some inexplicable reason, sixteen of these "Die Hards" determined not to leave it, but to remain in possession. At first, the police took no notice of this, saying that it mattered nothing to them what happened amongst Hungarians on Hungarian territory, as it was ex-territorial ground. However, Bela Kuhn has now interfered. His anger knows no bounds at the capture of the Bolshevik treasure, which means the end of his ambitious schemes, and he is making furious threats by telephone, and demanding an explanation from the Austrian Government. Eventually, he surrendered his ex-territorial rights, and formally asked the Government to take possession of the Embassy and to arrest the raiders. Now the police have entered and are holding the building, and sixteen of our officers are prisoners in the Embassy. Meanwhile, Mrs. Barlint having become ill, the Counter-Revolutionists decided to let her husband out to see her, and he was released from the vaults of the convent and, as there was no object in holding the others once one had been released, all have been allowed out, and now, apparently, have been arrested by the Austrian police. The Bolsheviks wish to get back into the Embassy, and our officers wish to leave it, so the position is very complicated. It is unlikely that Bulgar, Barlint, and Fenroy will be anxious to live in the Embassy with sixteen ferocious Counter-Revolutionists. The three are now making all kinds of accusations against me.

I lunched at Sacher's with Schumpeter, and had a long talk with him. He wanted to know when an armed force would be thrown into Hungary, and the reasons for the delay. I told him the plans were not yet sufficiently organized. I asked him what would happen to the sixteen officers in custody at the Legation, as I felt very strongly about their fate, knowing that they would be immediately shot if they were sent back across the Hungarian frontier. Schumpeter promised, as a member of the Government, that under no circumstances would this happen, and assured me I had nothing to worry about. Thus, somewhat relieved in mind, I returned to the Bristol, only to encounter fresh troubles.

I was trying to rest, when at 4.30 p.m. there came a loud knock. I opened the door gingerly, to find myself confronted by a gentleman I had never seen before, holding a nasty-looking yellow paper in his hand. He spoke to me in German, a language of which I understand very little, but I took the paper, and read enough to gather that he had something to do with the police. I rang the bell for the waiter to come in and translate. He said it was an order for me to attend the Central Police Court, room 56, immediately. I could find no one to take as interpreter, as Goldman was away, so I decided to go alone in a motor-car.

On arriving at the Police Station, I was taken before the sub-chief, who spoke English fairly well. His first question was: "Well, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett, it is said that you were the ring-leader of this raid on the Hungarian Embassy the other evening?" I assumed a most innocent air and replied: "I have my reputation as a journalist to uphold. What would my paper have said had I not been present at such an interesting and entertaining evening?"

This answer seemed completely to non-plus him, and after asking a few more questions, he saw it would be useless to attempt to obtain any information from me. Finally he said: "But where is the money?" On this

point I naturally could not enlighten him, as I did not know what had become of it. I quickly gathered that the investigation was in reality little better than a farce, and that the police were by no means anxious to go closely into the matter, but were obliged to do something to satisfy the Bolsheviks in the Government—Messrs. Deutsch and Bauer. I asked him whom he had seen and whom he had arrested. He replied he had already seen Pallavicini, Sigray, and Szamresanyi, but as he had no actual proof of their complicity he had been obliged to release them. I then inquired whom he intended to arrest, and he gave me the names of four men whom he said it would be necessary to detain in custody. Then I inquired if he had seen young Palfy, who mysteriously disappeared this afternoon, no one being able to trace his movements. He replied: "Yes, I have him in custody in the next room." I asked permission to see him, and begged him to release him as soon as possible, as he was not one of the leaders. He replied that he would have to investigate his case before coming to any decision.

I went in and saw young Palfy, whom I found very much upset at being kept so long in durance vile, and living in constant terror lest he should be put across the frontier and handed over to the tender mercies of the Bolshevik Government. I was able to reassure him on this point and he said he had telephoned to his wife, who was on her way from the Hotel Bristol to bring him food. I found to my relief that young Palfy had not implicated anyone, but had told a plain, unvarnished, straightforward story. Shortly afterwards, the long-suffering, pretty little "Jimmy" Palfy arrived, accompanied by Sigray.

The next visitor was the Chief of Police, Schrober. The Countess Palfy and I left him alone to have a talk with her husband. The upshot of this interview was his immediate release, and we all returned in triumph to the hotel, to find that our sixteen officers in the Embassy had also been released; so the whole affair had passed off much



better than might have been expected ; in fact it would seem as if the storm had already blown over. I dined at Sacher's with all the conspirators, and we had a jovial evening discussing the next move in the game.

*Monday, May 5th.* I went to the Embassy to see Cunningham and found Teleki there. He was in a great state of agitation because he had heard of the intended movement against Bruck, but did not believe that the time was ripe, and he knew perfectly well that the plans had not been properly thought-out or organized. I assured Teleki I was not in any way responsible for it, and that I had no intention of getting myself killed in a fool-hardy brawl, and that unless there was any chance of success, I would have nothing to do with it.

Sigray, Pallavicini, and Szamresanyi came to see me. Sigray then declared that it was their intention to make an attack on Bruck this evening and I offered to accompany him, but he begged me to remain in Vienna as I was so implicated in the affair of the Bankgasse, that if it became known that I had gone down to Bruck, the suspicions of the Austrian police would at once be aroused. It was therefore arranged that I should pass the night at the Palais Schonborn with Boroviczeny, awaiting the latest news on the telephone.

There are said to be three hundred Red Guards in Bruck, two hundred of whom can be relied on to join hands with the Counter-Revolutionists the moment they enter the town. The others are then to be disarmed. There are to be simultaneous risings in other towns in Western Hungary. Six aeroplanes are to start from Vienna at dawn to make a tour of the country, dropping proclamations to the people. Unfortunately, the two thousand men whom Cunningham and I understood were available for this vital operation have dwindled down to a paltry two hundred, but the Commander-in-Chief, Sigray, declares they are ample for this preliminary operation, as his plans are so carefully laid that but few men are necessary.

At 11 p.m. I left Sacher's after wishing the leaders of the forlorn hope the best of luck. But at 11.30 I was rung up by Sigray asking me to come immediately to his room. I found him with Pallavicini, Palffy, and two other members of the storming party. Now the supreme moment had arrived all were in a state of nervous excitement. Palffy was dressed in the uniform of the late Hungarian Horse-Artillery, and was covered with pistols, knives, water-bottles, field-glasses and electric lamps. His eyes contracted as he walked round and round the room like a panther, steeling his heart against the dangers of the night. Pallavicini and Sigray were dressed in old shooting-suits and looked more like a couple of the late Emperor's beaters about to start on a pheasant shoot or immense hare drive, rather than the Commander-in-Chief and Chief-of-Staff of a mighty military undertaking, which is destined to strike a final and decisive blow at Bolshevism. I gave them plenty of encouragement, wished them the best of luck, begged them to do nothing rash, and after a further offer to accompany them had again been refused, I left, promising to join them at dawn in the conquered town, whose streets would then be running with the blood of slaughtered Red Guards—if all went well. Inwardly full of misgivings, I motored to the Palais Schonborn, where I found Boroviczeny eagerly awaiting news.

*Tuesday, May 6th.* Everything in Hungary during the past three months has been a mixture of tragedy and Musical Comedy. It is essentially the land of music and romance, and the Battle of Bruck, which I am now about to describe, has proved to be no exception to the general rule.

I had arranged for the faithful Primus, the courier of the Hotel Bristol, to call for us with a car at 5 a.m. in which to motor to Bruck. But at 3 a.m. a Hungarian officer in uniform awoke us with a message from the front with the news that we were not to start under any circumstances, as the proposed "coup" had been postponed, owing to

the failure of the majority of the Counter-Revolutionists to arrive on the scene of action. In fact, the gallant band which was originally supposed to be two thousand strong, and which had then fallen to two hundred, had at the supreme moment of action dwindled to only thirty-three. The leaders have therefore sent urgent messages to Vienna to summon all available reinforcements and propose to make a fresh attempt to-night or at grey dawn to-morrow.

From this moment I realized the whole plan was doomed to failure, very likely to tragic disaster, or to end in a fiasco, as the news of the intended "coup d'etat" would be known all over Vienna in the morning, and would probably be cabled or telephoned to Budapest. In a measure I felt relieved because I knew the whole party were now safe, and I decided to motor down to Bruck and advise them to abandon their foolhardy proceedings and to wait to organize sounder plans for the future.

Later in the morning I went to see Countess Palffy to find out if she had any news of her husband. I found Ella Dessewffy with her, but they were without any news. Everyone in Vienna has apparently heard of the proceedings at Bruck, except the police, who either remain in ignorance or, what is still more probable, are winking their eyes at the whole proceeding. Then I went on to see Cunninghame, and told him exactly what had happened. He thinks the plan a crazy one and he begged me to try and stop it before anyone gets killed. He strongly advises, as an alternative plan, that we should collect every available man, and throw them into the Hungarian Mountains opposite Vienna Neustadt. Here we could hold out for a long time, and raise the peasants against the common enemy. Bulgar has now offered a million crowns reward for the recovery of the missing 135 millions taken from the Legation. I am afraid he will not meet with much success.

I had decided to motor to Bruck in the afternoon, but I was dissuaded by Boroviczeny, who had received good news

from the front. He had been informed that the Hungarian side of the town had already been occupied, and that the Counter-Revolutionary forces are preparing to move inland. However, I did not believe this statement, and I never discovered from whence it emanated. Later in the day I received a dirty slip of paper from a total stranger, signed Sigray and Pallavicini, asking me to come down at dawn on the following morning. Therefore I felt that I must abide by these instructions.

In the evening I went on to a dance. It was most amusing, but for me it was a kind of Waterloo Ball on a tiny scale, for I was full of apprehension as to what might be happening forty kilometres away during the dark hours of the night. At 1 a.m. I returned to the Palais Schonborn to snatch a few hours sleep.

*May 7th, 1918.* Boroviczeny and I awoke at 5 a.m. There was some delay before the motor turned up and it was six o'clock before we started for Bruck. During the night no word had reached us by messenger or telephone, which seemed rather ominous, as the leaders had promised to telephone the good news of the capture of the town. Shortly after leaving Vienna we encountered another motor car, coming at break-neck speed from the direction of Bruck and containing four men. We hailed them to stop. An unkempt Hungarian whom I had not previously met got out. He seemed to be in the last stage of nervous excitement and could hardly speak coherently. But this is what we finally learnt from him. At 1.30 a.m. the Hungarians, led by Sigray and Pallavicini, but only thirty-three strong, endeavoured to enter the Hungarian side of the town; but there had been treachery amongst the Red Guards who should have joined them, with the result that some of the storming party had been captured, and the rest forced to retire into Austrian territory. Amongst those captured he named Szmreesanyi, who had been taken with ten millions in cash on him, and it was rumoured that he had been immediately shot. Our informant declared he was now



hurrying back to Vienna to raise assistance from amongst the three hundred Austrian Naval officers in the capital who had volunteered to fight if they were paid. We had no reason to disbelieve this story. It was evident that the expedition had ended in a miserable fiasco and that some of our friends had fallen into the enemy's hands, and were now either shot, or on their way to Budapest as prisoners. Plunged in the deepest depression, Boroviczeny and myself hardly exchanged another word as the car hurried us towards Bruck. I decided to open up negotiations with the Bolsheviks to endeavour to purchase the liberty of my friend with some of the money captured in the Bankgasse.

Fortunately this step did not turn out to be necessary, for on entering Bruck, the first person our eyes lighted upon was young Palfy, looking wilder and more dishevelled than ever walking about in charge of some Austrian Volkswehr. "Where are the others?" I asked him. "Oh, they are all prisoners locked up in the barracks," he replied. "What!" I exclaimed in horror, "do you mean that the Bolsheviks have got the lot?" "Oh, no," he answered, no wise abashed, "we were captured on this side by the Austrian Volkswehr." I breathed a huge sigh of relief, and then burst into a loud laugh. So this was the end of the famous Battle of Bruck. Palfy was annoyed at my merriment, and replied: "It was no joke." "Well, tell us what happened." "Oh, at 1.30 we attempted to creep along the railway to seize the station. We had, however, been betrayed, and the Bolsheviks opened fire. This alarmed the Austrian Volkswehr, who replied. We were thus caught between two fires and had no alternative but to retire, during which we were all seized and captured by the Austrian Volkswehr. We were treated very roughly until we found an officer who knew some of us personally. Since that they have behaved very well, but we are now detained in the local barracks and they have telephoned to the Police in Vienna to know what to do with us. Do you

think they will put us across the frontier, because if they do, we are sure to be shot by the Bolsheviks?" I endeavoured to reassure him. Palfy explained that he was now out under a guard in order to look for his baggage, which he had left at a neighbouring hostelry.

He accompanied me to the barracks where I met the Austrian Commandant, and asked permission to enter. I was shown into a large room, where I found the bulk of the rank and file of this ill-fated expedition—including the two young Zichys, whom I had promised to bring back to their mother—gathered together, the picture of misery and despair. Some were lying on the bare boards, worn out with fatigue and still asleep; others were sitting with their heads buried in their hands, others wandering round the room, their minds filled with dreadful surmises as to their eventual fate. My entrance was greeted with a loud shout, and they crowded eagerly around me, evidently thinking I had come with a mandate from heaven or Vienna to release them on the spot. I was then conducted to another small room where I found the Commander-in-Chief, Sigray, still in his shooting-suit, lying stretched on a couch, dismally reflecting on the abrupt end of his military ambitions. Pallavicini was also there, and seemed relieved that the whole business was over. They greeted me warmly, but somewhat shamefacedly. I uttered no sarcastic reproaches, but simply could not refrain from laughing, as they looked so depressed and miserable. Then each proceeded to tell me his version of this unhappy affair.

All seem to have suffered a terrible fright, and in the darkness of the night the numbers of the enemy and the dangers they had encountered were naturally exaggerated a thousandfold. They placed the blame for their failure on the non-arrival of the expected reinforcements from Vienna, which forced them to advance against Bruck with only thirty-three men without a rifle amongst the lot, although the majority carried one or two pistols each. The

only weapon of one old Colonel was a bag containing ten millions of crowns, to be used in paying the Red Guards who had promised to join them. Sigray declared that his agents from amongst the Red Guards had come over at ten p.m. and reported all in order, but afterwards there must have been some treachery, as the Red Guards did not come over as promised, but fired on them instead. It was impossible to arrive at the exact truth of what happened afterwards, on account of the prevailing confusion, due to the sudden panic when they were fired upon in front and rear in the darkness of the night. Apparently the only person who escaped was one of their number who jumped into the river and has not been heard of since. It was discovered at a later date that the man whom Boroviczeny and I had met on leaving Vienna had betrayed his comrades to the Bolsheviks, and that the latter had changed the Red Guards on duty, for ones whose loyalty could be relied upon. This man was in fact a paid Bolshevik spy working as a Counter-Revolutionary. His treachery was not known until some time later, and he met a well-deserved fate. When the headquarters of the Counter-Revolution were transferred to Szeged, he was carefully watched, and caught in some fresh act of treachery. One night he was seized and, with weights attached to his legs, he ended his days in the swollen waters of the Tisza, which flows through that town.

I had taken the precaution to bring some food down from Vienna, and this was eagerly devoured by the prisoners. The Commandant of the Austrian Volkswehr was an extremely agreeable man, and one who thoroughly sympathized with the captives. I offered to give him a receipt for the lot and to take them all back to Vienna with me, but he declared he must wait for instructions from the police.

I therefore decided to return at once to Vienna to allay the fears of the anxious wives and mothers, who by this time had probably heard the most dreadful tales from the

stranger we had encountered on the road. Promising to do my best to secure their release, I hastened back with Boroviczeny. I stopped first at the Embassy to tell Cunninghame what had happened. He was extremely annoyed at the inanity of the whole proceedings, but was greatly relieved when he heard I had not been mixed up in it. Then I hastened to the hotel to see little Countess Palffy. I found her sitting on the end of her bed in a white kimono, a pink cap on her head, her face deadly pale, but looking extremely pretty. My worst fears were realized. She had been informed that her husband had been captured by the Bolshevists and that he had already, in all probability, been shot. Great was her surprise and delight when I told her I had left him only an hour before alive and well, and not in the hands of the Bolshevists, but safe in charge of a very friendly Austrian Volkswehr, and that in all probability he would be brought back to Vienna that afternoon. She told me that when she first learnt the news she was quite numbed by it, and could say or do nothing. Finally she had made up her mind to go and see Cunninghame and beg him to intervene, when my arrival ended her anxieties.

Then I went to see Ella Dessewffy to break the news of the sad termination of the Battle of Bruck to her. She laughed first of all, and then became very indignant, declaring it would discredit the whole aristocracy. In fact all those who yesterday were rather ashamed at not having joined the expedition are now congratulating themselves, because their friends say they showed great commonsense. Countess Dessewffy begged me to hurry off and see Schumpeter, to get him to intervene with the Austrian Government.

In the afternoon I learnt that all the prisoners had been brought up by train under escort, and were now at the Police Station, while Schrober, the Chief of Police, was making an investigation into the affair. I went round with Countess Palffy to aid them. The rank and file had

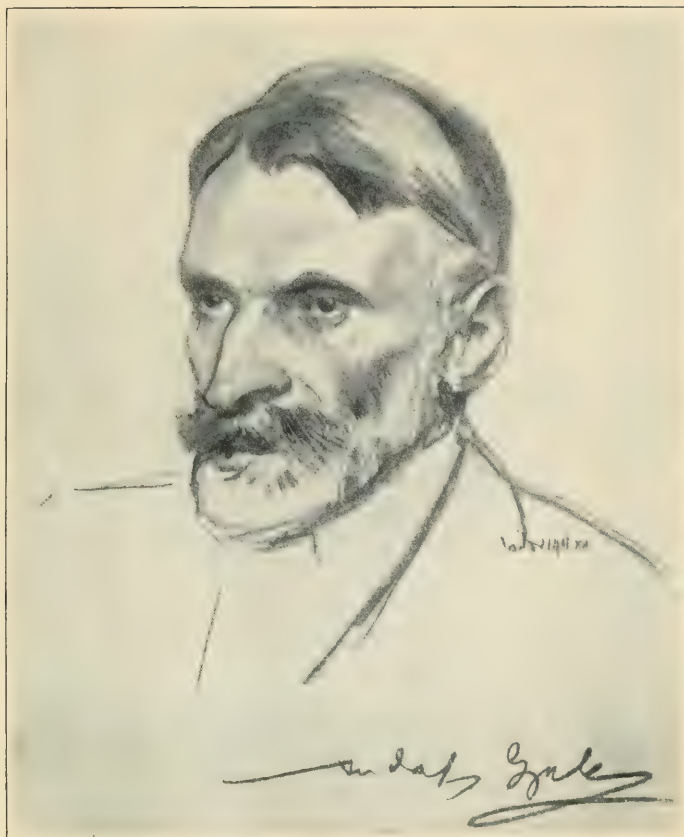


already been released with a caution, but they still held Palfy, Pallavicini, Sigray, and Szmreesanyi, as the ring-leaders. Countess Palfy, after a solitary interview with the kind-hearted Schrober, induced him to release her husband, and she returned in triumph with him to the hotel. But the other three were not to be allowed off so easily. All the trouble arose because more than ten millions of crowns, obviously part of the proceeds of the attack on the Bankgasse, were found on them and they had previously denied any knowledge of that affair. Now Schrober, against his will, but urged on by his Government, was obliged to pursue his investigation. The three leaders were therefore kept under lock and key until midnight, when they made an arrangement with the police which secured their release, to which I shall have occasion to refer later.

Schrober was surprised at seeing me again at the police station. He sent for Countess Palfy and said to her: "Who is the Englishman who is behind all this affair." She replied: "Oh, he only came here as a friend of the prisoners to try and help them. He was not mixed up in the affair at Bruck and strongly disapproved of it."

*Thursday, May 8th.* All the papers contain accounts of the Battle of Bruck, and some of the leaders' names are mentioned, but I am thankful to say that mine is not amongst them. I learnt this morning that Sigray, Pallavicini, and Szmreesanyi were all released at 2 a.m. I met Sigray at lunch and he explained what had happened. It appears that the police were very amiable, but firm, and declared they must keep the leaders in custody, unless the money taken in the Bankgasse raid was returned to them; that Bauer was very angry with them for having failed to trace the money, and that they, the police of Vienna, would be made to look very foolish in the eyes of Europe if they failed to find any part of the one hundred and thirty-five millions. They added they had traced the money as far as the Hotel Bristol, but then had lost all track of it, which was lucky for the Counter-Revolutionists.

The upshot of the whole matter was a compromise which satisfied both parties. The police promised to release the leaders if they would return some fifty millions out of the 135,000,000. The police, for their part, guaranteed not to hand the money over to the Bolshevists, but to hold it in trust for the new Government when it is established. Schrober, in parting, said: "If you intend any other movement, please do it in a more intelligent manner." Thus ends the miserable, ill-organized fiasco of Bruck. Those who took part in it are, for the time being, somewhat discredited, which perhaps is a good thing.



COUNT JULIUS ANDRÁSSY





## CHAPTER XI

### THE GOVERNMENT OF SZEGED

THE failure of the Counter-Revolutionists to capture the frontier town of Bruck brought their activities in Vienna to an end for the time being and the centre of interest was removed to Szeged, the big town held by the French in the neutral zone in Southern Hungary. On May 15th, the new Hungarian Government under Louis Karolyi was proclaimed at Arad. The politicians in Vienna, although rather disappointed that none of their names were included in the new Ministry, declared their readiness to support Louis Karolyi in order to present a united front to the Bolsheviks and to impress the Entente with the fact that there was an alternative administration ready to take over the government of Hungary.

At this time I made the acquaintance of the distinguished Hungarian statesman, Count Julius Andrássy, who arrived in Vienna from Switzerland. All his life has been devoted to politics and he has played a most prominent and distinguished rôle in Hungary. In the past he was the bitter enemy of Count Tisza and it was the quarrels of these two rivals which were more responsible than any other factor in breaking up the homogeneity of the Counts as the governing class in Hungary. Count Andrássy is an extremely courteous and charming man who is very popular with all who know his sterling qualities. His family is one of the most distinguished in Hungary and no man has suffered more in the revolution. He was formerly immensely wealthy, but now many of his estates have been taken from him. Some have been seized by the Rumanians, some by the

Czechs and others by the Yougoslavs. A great lover and patron of art, Count Andrassy has seen his priceless collection of pictures utterly destroyed by the Bolsheviks or carried away during the Rumanian occupation. Indeed the twilight of his life has brought him many misfortunes, not the least of which was the rôle played by his son-in-law, Count Michael Karolyi, who brought about the revolution and the inauguration of his short-lived Republic. Count Andrassy told me he strongly approved of the new Government in Szeged and felt it would gain in strength by not being associated with the former political leaders of the past.

Count Andrassy possesses a mind of great range and clarity of thought. He is a sincere patriot and no sacrifice is too great for him to make in the interests of his country. He accepted the thankless post of Foreign Minister just before the signing of the armistice and did his utmost to save something from the general wreck. His loyalty to his Monarch remained unshaken to the end. He was one of the first to greet the Emperor Karl on his return from Switzerland and on the occasion of the second attempt was amongst those leaders arrested by the Horthy Government and was kept in prison for nearly four months in Budapest, a great hardship for a man of his age. The leaders of the restoration were never brought to trial because the Government dared not take this extreme step in the face of public opinion and could in fact find no judges ready to try those who sincerely believed that they were acting in the best interests of their country.

A few days later I seized the occasion to visit another famous Hungarian statesman, Count Albert Apponyi, who after many adventures had succeeded in escaping from Hungary to his estate at Eberhardt, now in Czech territory where he was being held in semi-captivity although courteously treated.

Count Albert Apponyi is one of the most distinguished men in Europe. He is not only a politician but a pro-

found scholar and linguist of the first rank. He is one of the last of the intellectuals who have devoted their lives to politics and who have spent their spare hours in prolonged study. I have never met any foreigner who both spoke and read English as well as he. He also speaks French and Italian, and German and Magyar are his native tongues. The dead languages are equally well-known to him. In spite of the political changes of the times his influence remains very great and even the most bitter enemies of the Magyars regard him with admiration and respect. In the United States his name is as well-known as in Central Europe, and his frequent contributions to the American press are read by millions in search of current information on European affairs. His manners are both distinguished and courteous and no one has a greater power of presenting an argument precisely and logically or of listening patiently and sympathetically to the views of younger men far less learned and distinguished than himself.

I found the old statesman at lunch and he invited me to join him. We discussed the whole political situation. He shares Count Andrassy's opinion that the setting-up of the new Government in Szeged is an excellent move and will derive its strength from the fact that in the list of Ministers there are none of the old names. I told him Bethlen had been appointed the accredited agent of the new Government in Vienna. He replied that Bethlen's judgment was sound enough and he was a clever man, but his name would be fatally unpopular in the country at this crisis, as it was associated too much with the reactionary movements of the past. Count Apponyi then described to me in great detail how he and his wife, who is a sister of Count Mensdorff, late Ambassador in England, had managed to escape in a country cart from Budapest, and how they had travelled for days in this manner, never stopping for more than a night in any one place. Finally they succeeded in crossing the Danube in

an open boat and arrived safely in Czecho-Slovakia. There they had been dogged by detectives ever since because the Government feared the Count would commence pro-Hungarian intrigues on Czech soil, which would upset the general work of pacification, in which the Government was engaged. This morning he had seen the Minister of the Interior and had given his word of honour to refrain from all propaganda against the Czechs. But he made one reservation, namely, that if he were called upon to assist the formation of a new anti-Bolshevist government in Hungary, he would certainly do so. The Minister was quite satisfied with this explanation and said he could have a pass to go to Vienna any time he liked.

Apponyi has no illusions as to the real state of Hungary. He frankly admits that, except in certain of the South Danubian provinces, the aristocracy are unpopular, and the peasants will never rise on their behalf alone. A rebellion must be based on the general feeling of discontent which exists against Bolshevism, but this is not so strong in the country as in Budapest, because the people have not yet had time to feel its evil effects to the same extent. He divides the peasants into three classes—the large peasant proprietors, who are absolutely anti-Bolshevist; the small holders who also work on the big estates, who are wavering in their political opinions and need to be influenced by propaganda; and the labourers, who are frankly communist in their tendencies. Any Counter-Revolutionary party which takes the field must, in his opinion, be armed with a land policy which is attractive to the peasants. The wild talk of revenge and reprisals he regards as particularly foolish. Apponyi's views are the most practical and sound of any I have heard.

On *May 24th* I decided to go down to Szeged to find out what was really happening there and I was fortunate enough to be able to travel with the chief of our Food Mission in Vienna, Mr., now Sir Cyril Butler, in a special train as far as the Yougo-Slav Frontier. The train



is exceeding comfortable having formerly belonged to the Archduke Francis Ferdinand and he travelled on it on his last fatal journey to Sarajevo.

On arriving at Szeged I drove to the Hotel Casa, only to find there were no rooms available, and the manager declared there were absolutely none to be had in the town, which is packed, owing to the presence of the French troops and the supporters of the new Hungarian Government, under Count Karolyi. In addition there are a huge number of refugees who have fled from Hungary. Fortunately, we found several minor members of the new régime installed in the hotel, including Rudolf Zerkovitch, the brother of the Zerkovitch whom I had known in Budapest, and Dr. Augier. They told me that neither Count Karolyi, nor any of the prominent members of his Ministry, were in the town. They have not yet arrived from Arad, where the new Government was proclaimed, because, on the way, they were all arrested by the Rumanians, in spite of the fact that they had "sauvs conduits" from the French. But this incident is typical of the muddle which prevails everywhere throughout these countries. However, negotiations have taken place to secure their release, and they are expected to-morrow morning, together with Bornemisa, the Foreign Minister, who is coming from Belgrade. I speedily found out that the Counter-Revolutionists are split into hostile factions working against one another, to the detriment of the whole cause in the eyes of the French, who have no idea which is the proper committee to support. The Karolyi party complained to me bitterly of the conduct of the committee that was sent down by the parties in Vienna some weeks ago to organize at Szeged, under the leadership of an officer called Gumbush, whom I had met with Pallavicini in Vienna. It appears that, on the declaration of the new Government, the local Vienna committee publicly repudiated the Arad Government and announced that they alone could nominate a ministry. Thus the house is,

as usual, divided against itself and does not look as if it could stand for long. It is the old old story of ceaseless petty jealousies and internal dissensions. I told the Arad party that all this must stop, otherwise it would prove fatal to the cause in the eyes of Europe. They promised to do their best to end the quarrel.

In the middle of this discussion the hotel manager called me outside to tell me that, by mistake, he had brought me to the wrong lot of Counter-Revolutionists, and that the others were now waiting to see me. I made my excuses and left to visit Gumbush and his friends. They took me upstairs to their room and explained their point of view. They said they had received no instructions from their chiefs in Vienna that they were to recognise the new government of Count Karolyi, and that when it was set up in Arad, without containing the names of any of their friends, they assumed it must be in opposition to the Vienna parties, and they had therefore done their best to discredit it. It was only, they said, on the previous evening that they had received a letter from Count Bethlen, informing them that the new Government was to receive the undivided support of all the elements in Vienna. On my asking them why they had not, under these circumstances, made friends with the representatives of the new government now assembled in the town, they replied: "They are merely adventurers." I told them they would ruin everything by their petty dissensions, and that unless this sort of thing stopped at once, they might just as well retire from the business altogether. They promised me to keep quiet and to sink these differences until Count Karolyi arrived. I then returned to Augier and his lot and made them give me similar assurances.

Szeged is the largest town in Southern Hungary and contains some one hundred and thirty thousand inhabitants. It is situated on the banks of the Tisza, which is the second river in the country, and was built by the late Emperor Franz Joseph to replace a smaller town that

was destroyed in a great flood. It is well laid out, the streets are broad and the houses well-made, whilst the public buildings, for an agricultural town, are imposing. Szeged is now occupied by French troops and, with the large number of refugees, is terribly overcrowded. However, there is plenty of food and one is able to obtain anything one wants. The French have practically cleared out the Red Guards, but there are still any number of Bolshevik agents in the town.

In the morning I went with Augier to visit the French Commander-in-Chief, General Charpé. We were first received by the Chief of the Staff and then by the General. General Charpé threw off all reserve, and explained to me the difficulties of his position which have arisen through the dissensions of the Counter-Revolutionary parties in Szeged and Arad. He said, "I never know from hour to hour with whom I am dealing. One committee tells me it represents the new Government, and the next minute this is repudiated by another committee. It is impossible for us to assist in the establishment of a Provisional Government as long as these dissensions exist." I replied that I thoroughly sympathized with him, as I had had similar experiences myself for two months past in Vienna. The General then said: "The Hungarians are, as you know, a race of charming children."

I then told him that everything would be settled with the arrival of Count Karolyi, and that all the hostile committees would be reconciled and he would only have one Government with which to deal. He replied: "If that is the case, they can rely on my unconditional support to restore order. They will have food and arms and a free hand to do what they like in the town. We have only one end in view, namely, to eliminate Bolshevism from Hungary, but until they settle their internal differences, it is impossible to do anything." With this I quite agreed. He added: "I am very glad you have come down, sir, to endeavour to restore order, and to infuse a little energy into these proceedings,

which, up to the present, has been sadly lacking." I was highly pleased with this interview, as it shows clearly that the French are quite prepared to recognise and to accept the new Government.

In the afternoon Augier took me for a motor ride round the French lines. They have three divisions, according to him, in these parts. We reached their advance posts some kilometres outside the town on a road leading through a difficult morass. The Bolshevik outposts are one kilometre away, but, through a tacit understanding, the two sides do not fire at one another during the day and one is able to move about freely. At night they sometimes exchange shots. The chief business of the French outposts is to keep an eye on all persons trying to pass through the lines, as they are generally Bolshevik agents or spies. These are turned back if they can give no satisfactory explanation of their presence.

*Tuesday, May 27th.* Count Karolyi was expected to-day, but did not arrive, so that I had very little to do, except to listen to the quarrels of the various parties now assembled in Szeged. At 10.30 p.m. I decided to go for a stroll, but had not gone far when I found a bayonet sticking up against my chest, and the guttural voice of an Algerian Tirailleur asking what I wanted. I was so frightened lest he would not be able to understand my explanation, that I took off my hat, made a profound bow, uttered a few apologetic words in French, which he did not understand, while I kept one hand on my pistol, as I intended if he became nasty to shoot him before he could shoot me. However, although coloured, he turned out to be a perfect gentleman and allowed me to retire in peace. I decided I had better return home. The town is very unsafe. Last night the Bolsheviks tried to shoot one of our officers from inside the park, as he passed down the road. Fortunately the bullet missed its mark. The White Guard is endeavouring to wipe out these pests.

At mid-day on May 28th, Count Karolyi arrived. I had



a long talk with him after lunch. He is a small man of about fifty-five or sixty, with a scrubby beard and greyish hair, wears glasses, but has energetic eyes. He seems sound in his views and also to be quite disinterested. I spoke to him of all the dissensions which have appeared at Szeged, and how they have weakened the position of the new Government with the French. He said he realized all this, and would take steps to have it stopped at once, that all his plans had been upset because he had been kept a prisoner for nearly a fortnight by the Rumanians, in spite of the fact that he was travelling with a French officer and that all his papers were in order. I told him of my interview with General Charpé, and he said he was going to see him that afternoon at 5 p.m. and would see me again afterwards. He wants to strengthen his ministry, which he described as being very weak. He wishes Gratz to come down from Vienna as Minister of Finance and Teleki also as a Minister. He thinks it better for Bethlen to remain in Vienna, although he would like to have him with him. He intends to issue a fresh proclamation because now he has a paper in his possession brought down by Bornemisa, giving the complete adherence of all the parties in Vienna to the new Government. He also wishes to have the officers now in Vienna at Szeged.

On the whole, I went away favourably impressed with Karolyi. He seems a sound and practical man and to have decision, authority and force of character. There was further shooting in the park this evening, but no one was hurt.

*Thursday, May 29th.* Before leaving Szeged Count Karolyi asked me in the event of my going to Paris to convey a document containing the declaration of the policy of his Government vis-à-vis to the Entente, to the Supreme Council. This was drawn up after a consultation with his ministers and handed to me. It was both moderate and sensible in its tone. Bidding farewell to Szeged I returned to Vienna and at once left for Paris.

## CHAPTER XII

### FROM REALITIES TO PARIS

THE Spring of 1919 was one of the most glorious epochs in French history, when the representatives of over twenty nations assembled in Paris to settle a world peace. President Poincaré, forced only five years before to transfer the seat of his Government to Bordeaux, was now the proud host of all the famous leaders of the Entente. The brutal invader of 1914 lay prostrate, bleeding at every pore and begging for mercy at the hands of humanity he had wronged. The same taxis which had carried the soldiers of the Republic to the "crowning mercy" of the Marne now daily conveyed the dictators of the world's destinies to their labours. The same cannon which had thundered for five years on French soil, destroying towns, villages, cathedrals and chateaux, and sending countless thousands to eternity, now lifted their silent rusty mouths before the admiring gaze of the astonished Parisians from the Place de la Concorde to the Arc de Triomphe.

The intoxication of victory was in the air, and everyone in Paris from the "Big Four" to the midinette believed that a new era of Peace on Earth and Good Will towards Men had dawned at last, closing for ever the awful story of Armageddon.

But it was more difficult for those who, like myself, had spent many months amidst the realities of Central Europe to understand the prevailing optimism or to believe in the stability of any settlement.

On arriving in Paris in June, I was amazed at the appar-

ently light-hearted manner in which the most complicated geographical, ethnological and economic problems were being thrown like bones from the table of the Big Four to sub-committees to be settled overnight in time for a meeting of the chiefs on the following morning. Yet many of these complex problems had not been solved in a thousand years to the satisfaction of the parties involved. The future status of the forty-five millions of heterogeneous inhabitants of the old Austro-Hungarian Empire had not even come up for discussion; Germany alone absorbed the time and the energies of the Big Four, and the giant shadow of that fallen empire obscured from view the more distant horizon of lesser peoples who had fought side by side with the arch enemy.

The basic task of the Conference of Paris was to undo the work of the Congress of Vienna, held just a century before, and therefore comparisons between the two are not without interest. The Congress of Vienna was essentially monarchical and autocratic. Democracy was not represented. Its decisions were based on the paramount necessity of reasserting the doctrine of the Divine Right of Kings, challenged and almost shattered by the French Revolution. It was in fact the dying effort to re-establish the feudal system in Europe and to rechain democracy in fetters of steel.

From the tales which have come down to us, the Congress of Vienna was more picturesque than that of Paris. The kings, their ministers, soldiers, sailors and attendants were all in brilliant uniforms bedecked with medals, orders and many coloured ribbons. The strictest etiquette was preserved. Precedence was never departed from and every evening they danced the stately minuet probably because the fox trot and the shimmy were then unknown. Civilians were almost taboo, and in consequence Lord Castlereagh derived a certain distinction amidst this magnificent throng from the very contrast he presented in civilian attire to the other conquerors of the Great

Napoleon. At Vienna, the democratic statesman, the pressman, the vast system of propaganda, and the fair-haired lady secretary were quite unknown. The Conference of Paris with these modern accessories would have sent a thrill of horror down the spines of poor Talleyrand and Metternich, the two presiding geniuses.

The Conference of Paris was essentially democratic in everything appertaining to its machinery and essentially autocratic in everything appertaining to its decisions. For in the end four men succeeded in obtaining complete dominion over all their fellow workers. Outwardly, the Conference appeared to be the most happy-go-lucky elastic affair in which anyone who had a fancy and who happened to be in Paris could play some rôle, however humble.

One of the characteristics of that strange epoch in history known as the Lloyd Georgian era was the practice of employing amateurs rather than experts, of substituting the volunteer for the regular on every possible occasion and the introduction of enormous staffs, largely composed of lady secretaries and typists who in many instances obtained complete sway over their chiefs and had an important say in many matters of vital importance to the world at large. In Paris, one found hundreds of men and women engaged on nominal jobs who could hardly define their own particular sphere of utility. Lloyd Georgian rule was made effective by a gigantic system of Press propaganda, of which Lord Riddell was the head. He exercised unlimited power over the scores of pressmen from all parts of the world who daily waited at his Bureau for bones from the Big Four's overcrowded table. Without Lord Riddell the Conference would speedily have broken up in disorder.

Who will ever forget that British Colony established like some modern Calais in the heart of Paris at the Majestic Hotel and the strange scenes enacted there? Everything in it was essentially English from the food to the



fashions. And what a happy party they were! How everyone from the Scotland Yard detective at the door to the imported housemaid in the corridor revelled in this British occupation of Paris, dictating terms of peace to a prostrate world! How different from the stately etiquette and uniformed decorum of the Congress of Vienna! At the Majestic everyone lived on terms of perfect equality. In the bureau the chief dictated to the lovely lady secretary; in the dining-room she might or might not invite her chief to a seat at her table. All this seemed very strange to the French and to the Japanese and to other Entente representatives from remote corners of the earth. They had yet to become accustomed to the Lloyd Georgian era.

Every evening the great dining-room of the Majestic was packed with the peace makers and their guests. There one found most of the famous men of the passing hour eagerly seeking for places amidst this seething, virile female influence which for the first time had succeeded in forcing its way into public affairs through the channels of legitimate toil instead of through the boudoir. Prime Ministers, Diplomats, Generals and Admirals and famous experts were so plentiful that they passed almost unobserved amidst this throng.

With truly amazing skill, the Big Four, Lloyd George, Wilson, Clemenceau and Sonnino, succeeded in concentrating almost every ray of limelight on themselves, and others, whose names had been household words only a few months before, hovered in the wings and were content if they could obtain a little of the reflected glory. Hughes and Massey, great men in their own lands, seemed like little fishes out of water in Paris; Arthur Balfour stalked about almost unnoticed, looking as if he belonged to the Congress of Vienna, and even General Smuts, the forlorn hope of the Entente, excited but a passing interest after bearding the Bolsheviks in their lair at Budapest. The intricate system of press propaganda was focussed on the Big Four alone, and for the time being the

soldiers and sailors who had saved Europe disappeared from the public view, always excepting Marshal Foch.

Everyone who arrived in Paris during this period from the most remote quarters of the globe could find someone in the vast corridors of the Hotel Majestic prepared to listen to his tale of woe. In fact, the number of unemployed or semi-unemployed was legion. But I quickly discovered that unless I could obtain direct access to one of the Big Four I might just as well talk of Central Europe and its pressing problems from the top of the Majestic to the four winds of heaven, for all the effect it would have. There was in fact at this time no half-way house between the musty pigeon hole and the Big Four.

On June 8th, I was fortunate enough to have a long talk with one of the most remarkable personalities produced in the Lloyd Georgian era, Mr.—now Sir Philip—Kerr, the Prime Minister's secretary and "alter ego." I gave him a full résumé of the whole situation, which he promised to pass on to his Chief, and at the same time he urged me to prepare a memorandum on the subject.

This opened the doors of the Prime Minister's house, No. 23 Rue Nitot, and on the following day I received an invitation to lunch.

I was naturally pleased to have this chance of seeing the great in the midst of their labours, and I hope I am betraying no confidences when I write of what passed. A hundred years from now such little details will be found interesting.

At the door of No. 23 Rue Nitot I was met by a detective, who took infinite pains to discover if I was really myself and not some disgruntled Hun or Irishman come to finish off the Premier with poniard or pistol. After waiting some time, I heard a disturbance in the hall and a voice saying "Have you got him?" and another which replied "Yes, he is here." Then the hero of the War entered, having come straight from a conference with President Wilson. He greeted me in the most friendly

manner, and he certainly has the gift of placing modest mortals immediately at their ease. I expected to find the Prime Minister somewhat worn and weary after four months of super-strenuous toil in Paris. But not so. It was obvious from his healthy appearance, smiling countenance and sparkling eyes that the immense burden of rebuilding the world on a new ethical and ethnological basis and preparing the ground for the millenium of permanent peace weighed but little on his broad shoulders and optimistic mind. Was there ever before such a cheerful, confident, good-humoured personality engaged in the world's most serious crises? The errors of the past are dismissed by him as the inevitable incidents of everyday life and no evil forebodings ever cloud the future. Mr. Lloyd George is able to divide his mind into watertight compartments of twenty-four hours and to look on the bright side of everything during this period. When the next day comes round he makes a fresh start and has no hesitation in pursuing a diametrically opposite course.

One is accustomed to a stereotyped portrait of the world's great men, past and present, cast in the same mould; a dignified outward mien, not the suspicion of a smile, and a care-worn air as if their whole lives were an intolerable burden only shouldered through an unflinching sense of duty. Not so with the Welsh Wizard. Any picture which depicts him thus will be wide of the mark and historically inaccurate. He revels in difficult problems and political crises and thoroughly enjoys endeavouring to settle them within twenty-four hours—to his own satisfaction at least. Great physical strength, a first-class digestion—as proved by his love of inviting his friends to breakfast—a cheery optimism and a total inability to regard any problem as insoluble, combined with a mind with a truly remarkable capacity for repudiating its previous decisions, are his greatest gifts. Add to this a delightfully keen sense of humour, and you have the secret of his hold on others.



After a few remarks, he took me into an inner room where was spread a large scale map of the old Austro-Hungarian Empire. The late Sir Henry Wilson, Chief of the General Staff, was leaning over this. He reminded me of a visit I had paid him at St. Omer in the early days of the War. Lloyd George went up to the map and asked what point the Red Armies under Bela Kuhn had reached in Czecho-Slovakia. Wilson showed him the position according to the latest information they had received. The Prime Minister then replied with a comprehensive wave of his hand over the map: "Oh, they are still a long way from Pressburg. Look at all these mountains they must get through. I don't think there is much danger for the moment."

This remark showed a certain inability for map-reading, or else a total ignorance of the relative position in which Hungary stands in regard to the Carpathians, for the Bolshevik Armies had no mountains to pass, but the Premier seemed to think they had to come from the north of the Carpathians, or perhaps he had forgotten for the moment that he was dealing with Bela Kuhn, and not with Lenin and Trotsky.

I then had a talk with Wilson on the military situation, and pointed out to him how easy it would be for the French to advance on Budapest from the Szeged line in conjunction with the Rumanians, thus turning the line of the Tisza. Wilson replied that the French politicians were afraid of ordering any advance. I told him that all the French officers on the spot were in favour of such a move. Mr. Bonar Law then entered and we adjourned for lunch. When we were seated, the P.M. said: "I have heard a lot from Kerr on your views of Hungary and they were opportune, as I was able to tell them to Wilson and Clemenceau and we had a discussion on this matter this morning." He then invited me to repeat my views, which I did. A general discussion then followed. I was asked many questions by the P.M. and Wilson.



It was quite obvious that the Big Four had hardly given the countries east of Germany a thought, being far too occupied with the principal offender to bother about the lesser minions. Sir Henry Wilson was by far the best informed and expressed himself in favour of immediate intervention, but kept on repeating, "Where are the troops to come from?" I told him that the French had more than sufficient on the spot, if only they could induce the Czechs and the Yugo-Slavs and Rumanians to move simultaneously. He replied: "If the French are ordered to advance, they may refuse or else become Bolshevists. We must not forget what happened in Odessa." I told them the real trouble had arisen from the unauthorized advance of the Rumanians, which had enabled Bela Kuhn to raise the "national cry" and to rally the whole nation around him. The Prime Minister interjected: "Yes, that is quite right. The Rumanians are a perfect nuisance and have got us all into trouble."

In fact, L.G. had not a good word to say for any of our Allies. He abused in turn the French, the Italians, and the Czecho-Slovaks, and added: "Yes, I think the Hungarians are the best of the lot out there. They are the most powerful race and have always kept the others in order."

I told him the Hungarians had expressed a great desire to be received as a self-governing Dominion within the British Empire, and how they had asked me if it would not be possible to have a British Prince on the throne and if they could borrow one of the King's spare sons. At this he laughed and replied: "I doubt whether any of them would be willing to go."

He then said: "But don't you think Bolshevism will die out of itself? Europe is very strong. It can resist it." I replied that it only needed a little firm handling to destroy Bolshevism in Hungary, but that if it were left alone it might spread all over the neighbouring countries. I then told him of the plans of the Bolshevists, as disclosed

at the memorable dinner at the Hotel Ritz on the night of Smuts' visit. In fact, we discussed the whole subject until it was exhausted. In Mr. Lloyd George you have a brain which can adapt itself to circumstances with extraordinary ease and precision. No one is more clever at educating himself as an argument proceeds and in making good the deficiencies in his own knowledge by rapidly utilizing the information supplied him by others. This having been accomplished, his mind can pronounce judgments often extremely sound in theory, and often equally incapable of fulfilment in practice.

In the middle of lunch I took out a series of photographs of the Bolshevik leaders, most of them of Semitic origin. Lloyd George said: "We have a few like that in our country, haven't we, Bonar?" The latter, who had remained silent most of the time, replied: "Yes."

When we had finished with Hungary, the conversation turned on general matters and became highly amusing. Search the world over, you will not find a more agreeable conversationalist than Mr. Lloyd George. He related many of his intimate conversations with Clemenceau and Wilson, and apparently from what he said the Big Four were not always engaged in serious discussions on the reconstruction and regeneration of Europe. They must have spent a great deal of their time talking amongst themselves on abstract subjects. Apparently, Lloyd George and Clemenceau got on extremely well together and had endless discussions on religious matters. It was clear that the Prime Minister had a genuine affection for and admiration of the aged French statesman. He declared that Clemenceau was an atheist, and in spite of many endeavours he had been unable to convert him to any religious belief. The day before, he had accompanied Clemenceau to some ceremony in a Catholic Cathedral, which had made a great impression on the P.M. He said he quite understood why the Catholic religion was so popular, because it was

so extremely well stage-managed and appealed to so many people because it enabled them to obtain such a rapid absolution for their sins. Lloyd George then said: "It is a common error to suppose that there are more different religions in Wales than in England. In Wales we have only four, whereas, in England you have over one hundred." He then proceeded to rattle off the names of about thirty religions in England with remarkable facility. The discussion then turned on the question of land in England. He declared that the English laws made it extremely difficult to put land on the market and that the lawyers could generally find a way round all land legislation. He added that the greatest land reformer was the Conservative Chancellor, Lord Cairns, whose legislation did more to break entail than all his (Lloyd George's) measures which were so bitterly assailed at the time. I ventured to remark: "How absurd the fuss seems now over your Budget and taxation schemes of eight or ten years ago." He answered: "Yes, they are mere flea-bites to what people are willing to pay now. We have altered our whole perspective since the war. People see things in a very different light from what they did." Mr. Bonar Law then remarked that there was a wonderful boom in land sales at the present time, as the land was being bought by those who had made huge fortunes out of the war. Lloyd George replied: "Yes, it is a great pity to see the land passing into the hands of the 'nouveau riche.'" He added: "I would rather see the old landlords, who did far more for their tenants than the new ones, remain in possession."

After a very pleasant and instructive two hours we rose. I then handed him the declaration of policy *vis-à-vis* to the Entente, which I had brought back from Szeged, signed by the Hungarian leaders, Karolyi and Bornemisa and counter-signed by Bethlen on behalf of the Counter-Revolutionary Committee in Vienna. The P.M. seized it eagerly, remarking: "I will take it through to the



Conference this afternoon." He then proceeded to read through the clauses in detail and seemed satisfied with them, especially with the last which dealt with leaving it to the free choice of the Hungarian people to decide under what form of government they would live.

Towards the end of June, 1919, the long-drawn-out labours of the Conference of Paris came to a close, and on Saturday, June 28th, the Treaty of Versailles was signed in the Galerie des Glaces at the Palace of Versailles in the very same room where forty-eight years before Bismarck had proclaimed the foundation of the German Empire. It was freely admitted on all sides that the Treaty was far from being either perfect or complete, but it had become more and more obvious that unless something was signed quickly the Conference might break up without anything being put on paper, in which case every Nation would be obliged to arrange a separate peace with Germany, which would be fatal to the future of the Entente.

It was the natural ambition of everyone in Paris to be present at this ceremony. In consequence, the rush for seats was something stupendous, and not one per cent. of the applicants could be accommodated. In this respect I was singularly fortunate, thanks to the kindness of the ever considerate and all-powerful Lord Riddell, who had the entire distribution of Press seats in his hands. He invited me to write the story for his paper, "The News of the World," and allotted me an excellent seat. I need hardly add that I jumped at this offer and went away delighted with the cherished blue ticket in my possession.

The historic Saturday of June 28th, 1919, dawned fine and clear. Paris was agog with excitement. All work was suspended and even during the morning vast crowds filled the streets singing patriotic songs, admiring the captured cannon and cheering the portraits of great soldiers, sailors, statesmen, and kings freely displayed in all the windows. I set out at 11.30 a.m. for Versailles,



expecting to find the road blocked with vehicles, but to my surprise I found little traffic, most of the seat-holders preferring to come down later in the day. At the Reservoirs, where I went to lunch, I found a large crowd composed of representatives of the Press and curious sightseers from the countryside. After lunch, hundreds of cars containing ticket-holders began to pour into Versailles and thousands of others, unable to obtain admittance, came to have a view from outside. I went into the great courtyard of the Palace to watch the distinguished ones arriving. A cordon of troops in blue-grey lined the road from the Porte de Paris to the entrance of the palace courtyard, keeping all unauthorized cars and persons from entering. However, there was nothing like the crowd one would have expected under the circumstances and the general public seemed but little interested. A League football match would have provided far more animation. There was little or no excitement amongst the spectators and only a faint cheer greeted the arrival of some distinguished personage. The inevitable photographers hovered everywhere taking their snapshots. At 2.45 the privileged ticket-holders were admitted into the Galerie des Glaces. There was the usual French mismanagement and a regular football mêlée ensued for seats. If one wished for one's place one had to fight for it. I suppose, except for the historic association, namely, the fact that the German Empire had been proclaimed there in 1871, the Galerie des Glaces would never have been selected for the ceremony, for it would be impossible to have chosen a more unsuitable building for the purpose.

It is a long, narrow, ornate room with the innumerable mirrors that give it its name. In consequence, it is extremely difficult for those at the far ends to see what is going on in the centre, as the rows of chairs in front block the view of those behind. All this could have been remedied had the rows of seats only been raised in tiers

above one another, but the French authorities had done nothing. Thus one could only obtain a view of the signing of the World's New Charter of Freedom by engaging in a long-drawn-out struggle with those in your immediate front. In the centre of the room green baize tables had been arranged for the delegates of the nations who were to sign this historic pact. The privileged spectators and the representatives of the Press took their places at either end. The Press immediately became engaged in a most bitter struggle to uphold the liberties of the various democracies which they represented, for we found our view of the proceedings completely cut off by a magnificent row of dismounted Republican Guards with drawn swords and "beaver helmets." Shouts of indignation in every language greeted these sturdy defenders of the Republic, who refused to budge an inch or reply to the storm of abuse and contumely heaped on their devoted heads. The ranks in front urged on by those behind endeavoured to force passages through this solid phalanx. The "Garde Républicaine" was gradually pushed nearer and nearer the green baize tables until they threatened to overwhelm the chosen representatives of the nations. Murder and bloodshed were fortunately avoided by the timely intervention of Lord Riddell, who, using his well-known tact, finally induced the officer in charge to withdraw his guards. Then we were left in peace to watch the great ones arrive.

The ceremony was neither picturesque nor impressive and was singularly lacking in dignity. When Bismarck proclaimed his Empire in this same hall, the whole scene was magnificently stage-managed. Everyone was in uniform and a hundred minor kings and potentates surrounded the aged Prussian Monarch. But when the Entente proceeded to undo Bismarck's work, no one appeared in uniform except the Republican Guards and one or two officers, including Marshal Foch. Black frock coats and high hats were the order of the day, and any ceremony, however historic, is spoilt by these two appalling articles of male

attire massed together in large quantities. One by one the heroes of the Peace strolled in, each being greeted by a little cheer according to the extent of his fame or popularity. Old Clemenceau perhaps received the most enthusiastic reception. President Wilson took his place on his right and Lloyd George on his left. Then the precious Treaty, bound in vellum, was laid on the table with a gilded ink-pot and a formidable gold pen alongside. Finally, the German Delegates made their appearance and provided the real anti-climax. Two wretched middle-aged gentlemen, quite unknown to fame or sin, Messrs. Müller and Bell, entered looking like two frightened sheep being led to the slaughter. I doubt whether either of them had ever read the ponderous volume containing the Treaty. The presence of Messrs. Müller and Bell was incongruous, and the absence of all the principals in the drama of the last five years gave the proceedings an atmosphere of unreality. None of the kings, princes, soldiers, junkers and capitalists who had brought on the war was present, and Messrs. Müller and Bell provided but poor and inadequate substitutes. How different the scene might have been if only some of the Election promises of 1918 had been fulfilled! There should have been a huge hall with a prisoners' dock filled with the Kaiser, the Crown Prince, the Princelings, and all those in the celebrated Black List. The principal generals, junkers, capitalists and minor princes should have been brought to Paris to witness the downfall of their misplaced ambitions. Then one would have seen the real triumph of the frock coat and high hat, symbolical of peace, over militarism. But the German Delegates looked even more peaceful than the Entente Chiefs. I think almost everyone present went away with a feeling that the *dénouement* of the war had fallen far short of expectations, and that the terms of Europe's New Charter of Freedom would never be carried into effect "in extenso."

Before the ceremony began, a crowd of autograph



hunters, led by no less a person than the impulsive Mr. Hughes of Australia, rushed round the room to obtain the signatures of all the great ones present. This action on his part removed the last remaining element of dignity from the proceedings.

Before the last signature had been appended, I slipped out of the hall to hurry back to Paris and send off cabled accounts of the proceedings in time for the Sunday morning issue. The most elaborate precautions had been taken by Lord Riddell to ensure the Press messages arriving in time, and special telegraph operators had been put on at the Bourse to handle the despatches. I was one of the first to reach the Bourse and handed in two cables. But all to no purpose. The French made their usual hash of the whole proceedings. Either they got so muddled up that the cables were never sent at all, or else the telegraph clerks simply deserted their posts to join their fellow-countrymen celebrating the Peace in the streets and cafés. I am inclined to think the latter is what happened. It matters not; in any case none of our cables reached London in time for the first issues of the Sunday morning papers. Equally unfortunate were certain pressmen who had chartered two aeroplanes to convey them to London. One came down on the French side of the Channel and the other fell with a nasty bump in Kent. Fortunately, no one was hurt.

Peace with Germany having been signed, although not yet carried into effect, the light-hearted Parisians gave themselves up to the full enjoyment of their triumph. No city has surely ever witnessed such strange scenes as went on through the whole of Saturday afternoon, the whole of Saturday night and well on into Sunday morning. Every man, woman and child old enough to crawl seemed to be in the streets. Immense crowds paraded the principal Boulevards singing patriotic songs, and the British, American, Japanese, French and other National Anthems. Thousands of people joined hands and tore round in huge



circles, dragging one another along. Every captured cannon was festooned with humanity. The scenes in the streets of Paris were indeed impressive, far more so in fact than those at Versailles.

In the evening I attended a dinner at the Hotel Majestic, followed by a great ball in honour of all statesmen, diplomats, clerks, typists and lady secretaries, who had worked so hard to bring about the defeat and humiliation of Germany—on paper at least. A generous-minded Government, realizing the British tax-payer would make no protest on such an auspicious occasion, provided free champagne, not only for every member of the Missions and their guests, but for every waiter, hall-porter, detective, sentry and house-maid who happened to be in the huge building on this eventful night. The dining-room was packed, there was not a spare seat and the dinner in the general confusion consisted in grabbing any dish which came near your table. The Government champagne flowed like water, and everyone took full advantage of it. Unfortunately, the proceedings upstairs were somewhat spoilt because the waiters refused to wait for their own dinner down below. Not more than half a bottle of champagne ever reached any of the tables, the rest being drunk "*en route*," and long before the dinner was finished the majority of the waiters were completely "*non compos mentis*," or in other words, "*blind*." But no one cared or grumbled. Germany that day had been crushed for ever, and everyone who so wished was entitled to get drunk.

The dinner was followed by two huge balls, one for the lady secretaries and typists upstairs and another for the domestic staffs downstairs. Many of the most distinguished figures at the conference lent their dignity to these proceedings, including Arthur Balfour, Hughes, Massey, Lloyd George, and General Smuts, but I don't think President Wilson was present. Many fashionable ladies and their friends in Parisian Society walked in to join the revelry. The free champagne

flowed throughout the night and far into the early hours of the morning. Many of us left the Majestic to visit other haunts of Parisian night life. At the Pré-Catalan in the Bois, the proceedings baffled description. The place was crowded with screaming, shouting masses of people standing on the tables, lying on the floor, or sitting on the stairway. The waiters were all drunk, and it was quite impossible to obtain any supper or even a drink. Finding the cellars open, I went down myself on a voyage of discovery. I found several odd waiters down below lying amongst the bottles, partly intoxicated, who invited me to take anything I might require. I secured several bottles of champagne and returned in triumph to my friends. Then, leaving the Pré Catalan, we went on to the Abbaye in Montmartre. With great difficulty we secured admittance. The scene at the Abbaye—at all times a lively spot—baffles all powers of description. You just sat or stood where you could find room, drank out of anybody's glass and danced with anyone you found yourself next to. Here we stayed dancing and singing until past 5 a.m. when we returned to the Ritz. The streets presented an extraordinary sight. The lateness of the hour and the revels which had been kept up for so long seemed to have made no essential diminution to the numbers in the streets. The Boulevards were closed to traffic and every building was still lit up. Hundreds of electric lights and revolving signs illuminated the huge crowds who shouted and sang with undiminished vigour. But the Champs Elysées presented the most extraordinary sight of all. It was as if it had been turned into one enormous ballroom. A thousand improvised balls were all taking place at the same time. The captured cannon were to be found all over Paris, having been hitched to motor cars, and it took the military authorities days to collect them from the side streets and Boulevards. Somewhere about 7 a.m. this historic evening ended as far as I was concerned. On the night of June 28th, 1919, the triumph of

the Allies reached its zenith, and never had there been such friendly feelings amongst the various Entente States. On the following morning the world was reluctantly obliged to return to realities which after three short years have rendered the Treaty of Versailles incapable of fulfilment.

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE END OF THE SOVIET RÉGIME

WHILST the Conference of Paris was dictating the terms of a peace which the victors believed would embrace the entire world and insure the future salvation of man by giving the new generation time in which to realize the futility of periodic appeals to brute force and the eminent justice of the final settlement, numerous small wars were continually breaking out in Central Europe, which escaped the notice of the public at the time and which may even be forgotten or ignored by the future historian. These wars were fought in spite of the mandates and orders to the contrary issued in the name of the Big Four to all the peoples of the earth.

The least known of them all was that waged by the Soviet Government under Bela Kuhn against the Czechs for the liberation of Slovakia. To understand its origin and purport we must return for a moment to the close of the World War and the signing of the Armistice.

Towards the close of the year 1918, when it became obvious that naught save a miracle could save the Central Powers from defeat and disaster, the revolutionists sent from Moscow did their utmost to undermine the discipline of the Hungarian army. For a long time the troops held out gallantly against these insidious intrigues, but at length the divisions on the lines of communication became disaffected and the contagion spread to the front trenches, finding a ready soil after so many defeats and disasters.



The revolution started on October 28th, 1918, at first, it was supposed, with ultra-national motives behind it, but it soon became clear it was an actively engineered international Bolshevik agitation. Once the Hungarian army was disbanded, the instigators of the revolution regarded with indifference the advance of the Czech, Rumanian and Serbian troops into Hungarian territory. Here and there the disbanded soldiers who had retained their arms endeavoured to resist the invaders, but their efforts were spasmodic and unorganized.

On November 8th, 1918, eight days after the outbreak of the revolution, Czech bands made an attack on upper Hungarian territory, but were pushed back within a few hours by the armed peasants and disbanded soldiers. On November 17th, a few Czech hirelings—Slovakians of Northern Hungarian nationality—declared themselves the representatives of the Slovak nation at a meeting held at Prague, at which only Czechs were present, and requested the aid of the Czech Legionary troops to protect them against the brutalities of the Hungarians. A resolution was passed at this meeting, asking the Czech Government to mobilize against Hungary and to deliver Slovakia from Hungarian dominion. The official Czech correspondence gives long accounts of this meeting and of its endeavours to justify the Czech imperialistic claims on Slovakia. Even at this early stage, the organizers of the movement spoke of the dangers of Bolshevism in Hungary and urged the occupation of Slovakia in order to preserve that country against Bolshevik devastations and propaganda. In other words they sought to find an excuse for permanently annexing Slovakia.

On November 18th, 1918, Czech troops tried to pass the Hungarian frontier near Senice, north of Pozsony (Pressburg), as well as along the frontier railway between Kassa and Odenberg and north of the watering-place called Postyen. All these attacks were thrown back by the local population largely composed of ex-soldiers. But at Press-

burg the Czechs organized a meeting to protest against the Hungarian atrocities in Slovakia, these so-called atrocities being the repulse of the Czech attacks!

On November 20th, there were no Czechs on Hungarian territory, but a fresh attack was made at Lamacs, near Pressburg, and was followed by further attempts near Postyen. Up to the first days of December these sporadic attempts continued with but little success, being beaten back by the population and by the remnants of the disbanded Hungarian army.

On December 3rd, the Entente formally requested the Hungarian Republican Government of Michel Karolyi to evacuate Slovakia. Conforming to this order of the Entente, the Czech troops occupied without opposition on December 8th, the line of demarcation established by agreement between Karolyi and Franchet D'Esperey, half-way between the Danube and the Carpathians.

On December 13th, the Czechs, without stating any reasons, gave notice to the Hungarian Government that they no longer intended to observe the line of demarcation and began to march towards the Danube. They met with no opposition from the Hungarian regular troops under Karolyi's orders, and proceeded to occupy the town of Rutta and the important railway junction of Nyitra. But shortly afterwards Hungarian volunteers, assisted by the local population, threw back the Czech troops and began to march against Pressburg. It was at this point that the French intervened. Between December 12th and 14th, French troops began to arrive in Pressburg. A strong Czech column advanced against Kassa on December 17th, and threatened to occupy that town. A meeting was held and a resolution was passed to hold the town to the end and to request the Hungarian Government for troops. But this assistance never arrived. The Czechs then continued their advance very slowly, and Eperjes, the most important town after Kassa, was seized on December 28th. Then they continued their operations against Kassa, which was

occupied with the aid of French troops at the beginning of January. Pressburg was then handed over to the Czechs by the French on January 1st, 1919, when the Czechs felt themselves sufficiently strong to resist any attempts at rebellion on the part of the subjugated native population. Thus in the first days of January, 1919, the whole of Slovakia was occupied by the Czechs from the Danube to the Carpathians. From that date the Hungarians have been animated by the most bitter feelings against the Czechs.

Bela Kuhn on his assumption of power was fully aware that the surest way to unite the Hungarian nation and to consolidate his authority would be the slogan of a war against the Czechs to recover Slovakia. In the last days of May, 1919, the Czech Army commenced a campaign against Hungary, ostensibly for the purpose of turning out the Bolsheviks. This invasion was not altogether unwelcome to Bela Kuhn and his friends, who could thus find some employment for the Red Troops, who threatened to cause disorders in the capital, and also it gave the Soviet Government the opportunity of spreading the blessings and doctrines of Bolshevism throughout neighbouring states. No one realized better than Bela Kuhn that if confined to Hungarian territory alone, Bolshevism must burn itself out and collapse. He also realized that a war against the Czechs would not be unpopular in Hungary, and would serve to turn the minds of the people from internal to national issues. The Czech Army was badly organized and badly disciplined and refused to face the Bolshevik troops led by officers of the old régime, who had been forced to serve by the Soviet Government, which held their families as hostages for their good behaviour. Several Hungarian officers, who managed to escape from the Red Army to Vienna, related how they had done their best to insure the success of the Czechs by manœuvring in a manner which would enable the enemy to advance when and where they liked. But their efforts were in vain,

for the Czechs simply refused to face the Hungarian troops and either ran away or surrendered.

In the first days of June, Kassa, the most important town in Northern Hungary, was re-occupied by the Red Armies, which commenced to advance against Pressburg. At this hour the fortunes of the Bolshevists reached their zenith. Bela Kuhn not only thought he was in a fair way of securing recognition by the Entente, but his armies had cleared Hungarian territory of their enemies and were now threatening Pressburg. The result of these successes had the effect of arousing a wave of national feeling amongst the Hungarian bourgeoisie, and even amongst the counter-revolutionary elements exiled in Vienna. For the average Hungarian, much as he disliked the Bolshevists, possessed an even greater hatred of the Czechs, and the majority hoped that Bela Kuhn would inflict a decisive defeat on the common enemy. Even those who were not prepared to assist the Bolshevik armies personally in the field, felt it would be unpatriotic to continue their counter-revolutionary activities at such a crisis, and it was therefore decided to suspend all operations against the Soviet Government until the ultimate issue of the Czech war became known. Thus for a brief hour a curious situation arose, when the Bolshevists and the Counter-Revolutionists forgot their differences and mutually assisted one another.

On June 6th, General Mittenhauser, the French Commander of the Czech Army at Pressburg, cabled to Paris that without the assistance of the Entente troops, it would hardly be possible for him to hold the town against the Red Armies and that in his opinion the establishment of a Soviet Government in Prague would follow the fall of Pressburg.

On June 8th, in answer to Mittenhauser's cable, the Big Four addressed an ultimatum to Bela Kuhn, requesting him in polite terms to stop his operations against the Czechs, and promising him, in the event of his doing so, the "provisional recognition" of his government, and



an invitation to Paris to negotiate for peace on behalf of Hungary.

An authentic copy of this ultimatum fell into the hands of A. Boroviczeny—the active counter-revolutionary agent in Vienna—a few hours before it was delivered to Bela Kuhn, and the former at once communicated its contents to his Committee assembled in Vienna. But at this crisis, there had been some hostile demonstrations in Vienna, and Count Bethlen—the accredited agent of the Government of Szeged—had left the capital, it is said on the advice of the Austrian authorities, and was nowhere to be found. Most of the other leaders had also left and only Pallavicini and Sigray remained.

Now it was all important to the Counter-Revolutionists that the Entente's ultimatum should be rejected by Bela Kuhn, otherwise the two events which they most feared would be brought to pass, viz. (1) the recognition of Bela Kuhn by the Conference of Paris, (2) the cessation of the campaign against the Czechs.

Boroviczeny, Pallavicini and Sigray, who a few weeks before had been engaged in the raid on the Bankgasse, which completely wrecked Bela Kuhn's carefully organized plans for a revolutionary outbreak in Vienna, now decided to enter into negotiations with the Bolshevists and to promise Bela Kuhn, if not their active support, at least their neutrality, if he would only reject the Entente's ultimatum. That afternoon Boroviczeny went to see Fenyo, the newly-appointed Bolshevist agent in Vienna, and talked over the situation. He pointed out the weakness of the Entente and how impossible it was for France or England to send troops in support of their ultimatum, and he showed Fenyo a copy of Mittenhauser's cable, which proved conclusively how alarmed the French and Czechs had become on account of the operations against Pressburg. In conclusion, Boroviczeny promised the neutrality of the Counter-Revolutionists and offered to disclose all civil and military secrets which came into the

possession of the committee in Vienna. Fenyo at once recognised the importance of these overtures; promised to communicate with Bela Kuhn by telephone and to let Boroviczeny know the result.

The answer came the following morning in a very skilfully worded diplomatic note, which was neither an acceptance or rejection of the ultimatum. But it was good enough for the purpose of the Counter-Revolutionists, and having succeeded in obtaining it a few hours before it was published officially, Boroviczeny proceeded to place telegrams in the French and English papers, stating that Bela Kuhn had definitely rejected the Entente's terms. The European Press put the same construction on Bela Kuhn's reply and after its receipt the Conference abandoned all idea of recognising the Soviet Government. On the following day the attacks against the Czechs were continued and a further advance was made against Pressburg. At the same time the Counter-Revolutionists issued a strong protest against recognition, and on June 12th, Boroviczeny was officially invited to the French Mission and informed by General Cherise that the Entente would not recognise Bela Kuhn.

But the Czechs were saved by other means, which I will briefly explain, and Pressburg was not destined to fall after all. On June 17th, a second ultimatum was sent to Bela Kuhn by the Paris Conference, ordering him to stop his advance against Pressburg at once, as otherwise the French troops concentrated at Szeged and the Rumanian troops concentrated at Arad would advance against Budapest. At the same time numerous counter-revolutionary outbreaks, which could not be checked by the leaders in Vienna, broke out in Western Hungary. Bela Kuhn thus saw his position threatened by the French and Rumanians from the south and east, and by the insurgents from the west. The presence of his armies was thus urgently required to defend his threatened capital and he was obliged to suspend his advance against Pressburg at the

very moment when everything pointed to success. The Soviet armies were now in possession of the greater part of Slovakia and before withdrawing them, Bela Kuhn established the Slovakian Soviet Republic, hoping that Pressburg would be occupied by the partisans of the New Republic. Then he withdrew and concentrated his armies against the French and Rumanians. Immediately after his departure, the Czech Armies re-occupied Slovakia, and the Soviet Republic lived but a few days.

When I returned to Vienna on July 18th, after my visit to Paris, the days of the Soviet were already numbered. Bela Kuhn was tottering to his inevitable fall, and the enemies of Hungary were rapidly closing in on her capital from all sides.

Bela Kuhn had failed in his efforts to convert the neighbouring states to the faith of Moscow, and it was impossible for Bolshevism to thrive in Hungary isolated from the rest of the world and surrounded, as the Red Armies were, by French, Rumanian, Yugo-Slav, and Czech troops. Yet Bela Kuhn had very nearly succeeded in his mission. Those who are inclined to laugh at and to belittle the efforts of the Counter-Revolutionists in Vienna which terminated in the fiasco of the "Battle of Bruck," should not forget that the principal achievement of this little band of "Die Hards" was not the failure at Bruck, but the successful raid on the Bankgasse which, at one stroke, robbed the Soviet Government of the immense sums of money deposited at the Hungarian Legation to finance a revolution in the old capital of the Empire. If few were prepared to give the Counter-Revolutionists credit for what they had done, Bela Kuhn himself was under no illusions concerning them, for he and his colleagues knew well the deadly nature of the blow which had been struck at the very heart of their carefully organized scheme of propaganda throughout neighbouring states. All the leaders in this enterprise were condemned to death, but none of us turned up to suffer

the extreme penalty of the law. Looking back now some of the actions of the Counter-Revolutionists in Vienna may appear a little wild and even childish, but the poverty of their resources at the time must not be forgotten, or the fact overlooked that they were the first to organize any regular resistance to the minions of Moscow, and to strike the first blow, not only to save Hungary, but incidentally in the interests of Europe.

Early in June, as I have already described, the Red campaign against the Czechs seemed to offer the brightest prospects of success and Bela Kuhn was within an ace of obtaining at least "provisional recognition" from Paris. This was checkmated largely by the efforts and intrigues of the Counter-Revolutionary Committee in Vienna, and Bela Kuhn's hopes were finally dashed to the ground by the second ultimatum of the Entente on June 17th, which threatened Hungary with the invasion of Rumanian, Yugo-Slav and French troops.

Had Bela Kuhn obtained "provisional recognition" on June 6th, he would have been invited to Paris to negotiate with the Entente. Under these circumstances the Rumanians could hardly have continued their advance on Budapest and the unhappy country would have remained for an indefinite period longer in the clutches of the Soviet Government.

For the rest, the economic ruin brought on Hungary was the principal internal factor in bringing about the downfall of Bela Kuhn and the Soviet rule. Unable to trade with neighbouring states, the currency began rapidly to fall causing an ever-increasing discontent amongst the peasants. It became more and more difficult to feed Budapest and other large centres of population, as the peasants refused to part with their grain, vegetables and other food supplies in return for paper which they began to realize was almost valueless. In vain the Bolshevists sought to restore confidence by issuing a new "Blue Money" which was to take precedence of the old note



issue of the former Austro-Hungarian Bank. The peasants preferred the old notes of Franz Joseph's Empire and the Blue Currency speedily fell to half the value of the old.

The final knock-out blow came from the outside and was delivered by the Rumanian armies, which had gradually advanced to the line of the Tisza. By the agreement arrived at in November, 1918, between Michel Karolyi and General Franchet D'Esperey, the Rumanians had to remain on the fixed line of demarcation, pending the settlement of Hungary's future by the Conference of Paris. But from the very first there was never any disposition shown by any of Hungary's enemies to observe this agreement, and, as I have already described, as far back as the first days of March, the republican forces of Karolyi were engaged in constant skirmishing with the Rumanian invaders.

When he withdrew his forces from the invasion of Slovakia in June, 1919, Bela Kuhn concentrated his armies on his Eastern and South-Eastern fronts to oppose the Rumanian advance; he was also faced with the possibility of a French advance from Szeged, where the counter-revolutionary forces under Admiral Horthy were concentrated. At the same time the Soviet Government was obliged to keep considerable forces in Western Hungary to repress the rebellions which were constantly breaking out in spite of the presence of the "Lenin Boys," under Szamuely and Cserni, who had been despatched to the Western Comitas. Throughout the remainder of June and almost all of July there was constant fighting on the Rumanian front; the Bolshevist armies put up a desultory resistance, sometimes gaining local successes, sometimes sustaining reverses, but they were out-numbered, ill-organized and almost entirely lacking in artillery, and could make no headway against the invaders. Nor could the senior officers directing these operations under "force majeure" be relied upon. Colonel Julier, the Chief of the

Bolshevist Staff, was in open communication with the Committee in Vienna and not only disclosed the whole plan of campaign and disposition of the Red troops, but endeavoured to arrange for the troops under Admiral Horthy to advance from Szeged, in order that they might join hands with a Red Division holding the frontier in front of that town, which was prepared to join the Whites. It was part of Julier's plan that these united forces should attack his army in flank as it marched against the Rumanians. Surely this drama of a Commander-in-Chief planning an attack on his own flank is unique in history! The plan was brought to nought, because the French in Szeged refused to allow the counter-revolutionary troops to leave the town. Therefore this little army was destined after all to play no part in the expulsion of the Bolsheviks. They were only allowed to keep thirteen hundred men under arms as a kind of local town guard.

Meanwhile, the Government in Szeged had been reconstituted. Count Julius Karolyi, wearied of constant intrigues and beset by difficulties placed in his way by the French, resigned and his place as Chief of the Provisional Government was taken by Abrahams. Bornemisa, Karolyi's Foreign Minister, went with him and his place was filled by Count Paul Teleki, the famous geographer; while Count Bethlen was confirmed in his position as Representative of the Government in Vienna. Admiral Horthy, who had been the Minister of War, also resigned to take over the active command of the so-called "army" in the field.

The end of the Soviet dominion had now come. During the whole of the Bolshevik régime in Hungary, the Rumanians occupied the line of the Tisza. The final advance against Budapest, apparently with the consent of the Entente, began successfully on July 28th, 1919. The Rumanians crossed the Tisza on August 1st, 1919, and marched into Budapest on August 3rd. The occupation was extended east as far as the River Raba. The

Rumanians remained in occupation of the Hungarian capital until November 16th of the same year.

Meanwhile, on Friday, July 31st, 1919, a historic event took place in Budapest. When the Rumanians crossed the Tisza, Bela Kuhn and his colleagues realized the game was up and now had only one thought in mind, namely, the saving of their own skins. They had previously arranged with the semi-Bolshevist Government of Vienna to provide them with an asylum where they might flee from the inevitable retribution which was to come. On July 31st, Bela Kuhn and most of his principal colleagues left Budapest for Vienna in a special train, accompanied by the attaché of the Austrian Legation, Baron Arthur Hammer-Purgstall.

Thus ended ignominiously Lenin's great mission of converting Hungary to the doctrines of Moscow. He had selected for his experiment one of the oldest and most feudal countries in Europe and he chose men of marked ability and courage to carry out his mission. Bela Kuhn, although he failed, was not disgraced and has left a reputation for great strength of character, ability, diplomacy and courage. But the odds were too much against him, and although the Hungarian political soil was ripe for drastic experiments after the disasters and defeats of the War, the common sense of the mass of the people rapidly asserted itself when they discovered that their new leaders with their new creed compared in every respect unfavourably with the old leaders whom they had temporarily discarded.

Happy the Bolshevik leaders who managed to escape from Budapest with Bela Kuhn. They were interned in Vienna for nearly a year, protected by the good offices of the Austrian Government, and were finally allowed to escape or were released. Bela Kuhn rejoined Lenin and as a reward for his eminent services was made Governor of the Crimea, after the defeat and disruption of Denekin's armies. That position I believe he holds to this day.

Where are the other leaders—Kunfi, Böehm, Pogany, and Szamuely? Most of them have disappeared from the arena and are now hiding in neutral countries, living probably on what they were able to put aside in their brief heyday of pomp and power.

Those who had the temerity to remain in Budapest, or who were not invited by the leaders to leave in the "Special," were arrested and have remained in durance vile ever since. Some have been tried and executed, but the majority owe their lives to the fact that Lenin and Trotsky threatened reprisals on the Austrian and Hungarian officers, large numbers of whom are still prisoners in Russia and Siberia.



## CHAPTER XIV

### THE SOUL OF BOLSHEVISM

I HAVE listened to many Bolsheviks endeavouring to define Bolshevism, but I have never heard a satisfactory explanation. Radek, the notorious Russian propaganda agent, who was for a long time a prisoner in Berlin, was once taken to task and told that he and his associates had not only succeeded in ruining Russia, but had thrown back the economic development of that country for a century. Radek replied: "We know we have. It is our deliberate policy to destroy all the hitherto organized elements of society." "Well, what will happen then? What good will you do?" he was asked. He replied: "Why, then will come the great day." "What great day?" "Why, the great day when we shall start building the world afresh." Beyond this vague statement he would not commit himself. What Lenin and his associates mean by building the world afresh is not very clear. But stripped of all imaginary idealism and non-essentials, Bolshevism would appear to be an effort to re-shuffle the entire wealth of the world in order to give its exponents a fresh deal, with the aristocracy and bourgeoisie eliminated from the field of competition and the proletariat working as slaves.

Bolshevism makes its preliminary appeal to the masses only after unparalleled disasters and world cataclysms have shaken the confidence of the people in all other forms of government. They accept it on its face value in the fallacy that it brings liberty, equality, less work, and a greater share in the material profits and good things of life.

Bolshevism is as far removed from genuine socialism, framed on constitutional lines with fair play and equal opportunities for all, as the sun is from the earth. It is in reality the "horriddest tyranny"—to quote Cromwell—that has ever yet been devised for the slavery of mankind. It entirely eliminates from any kind of recognition of the right to exist two essential classes in the State, namely, the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie, amongst whom are included all captains of industry, bankers, capitalists, clergy, etc., all those in fact who have been in any way responsible for building up the wealth, commerce and prosperity of the State, or of carrying on the machinery of government. Bolshevism creates nothing. It does not even profess to do so. It merely takes over what others have created without any form of compensation, ostensibly in the interests of the proletariat, which is the excuse employed for every act of robbery and oppression. The apostles of the new creed in Hungary recognised their own shortcomings and realized almost from the start, that they were quite incapable of carrying on the machinery of government and the commercial enterprises which had been built up in the course of years by the best brains in the land. Therefore they did not make the initial mistake which Lenin made in Russia of trying to eliminate the bourgeoisie "en masse"; they chose rather to enslave the bourgeoisie and captains of industry, bankers, shopkeepers, etc., and to force them to continue to work as foremen or clerks under Jewish overseers. For this highly intellectual work, the former directors were allowed to receive salaries which could, under no circumstances, exceed those which they formerly paid to the most humble of workmen. It naturally became quite impossible to carry on the industrial life of the country on these lines, because all incentive was lacking and competition was dead; the owners fled from the country or else only remained in semi-slavery in order to keep an eye on their affairs until Bolshevism fell of its own incompetency.

As there were no trained minds to replace the absentees, the commerce of the country gradually dwindled away to the vanishing point. All industries which remained actively working in Hungary, under Bela Kuhn's rule, were run at a loss and only kept going by the Government making up the increased wages to the workmen by constant issues of worthless paper.

It is a cardinal principle in the creed of the true Bolshevik that the aristocracy and bourgeoisie are not entitled to enjoy any civil rights. I have argued this point with many of the Extremists and asked: "What will happen if the bourgeoisie refuse to work in the humble position which you now propose?" "Oh, we have arranged for that" was the invariable reply, "they must either do what we want or else we shall allow them and their families to starve by refusing to place them on any of the food registers, without which they will be unable to buy anything." Starvation is in fact the true essence of unadulterated Bolshevism and the favourite weapon of tyranny when the prison, the firing-party, and the gallows can do no more to reduce the civil population to submission.

Ostensibly all these acts of murder, robbery, and oppression are committed in the interest of the proletariat, who are to enjoy all the privileges and benefits which your Bolshevik declares were formerly the exclusive perquisites of the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie. In reality, the proletariat only enjoys more leisure and possibly higher wages just as long as the Soviet Government is able to turn out paper money without debasing the currency to such an extent that the peasants and farmers refuse to accept it in payment for food supplies. Then comes the breaking point and either the government must fall or enforce compulsory sales by force of arms, otherwise the inhabitants of the cities will perish from starvation. Once this stage is reached, liberty, freedom and equality are heard of no more. The working classes under Bolshevism have absolutely no say whatever in the government. There

is no Elective Assembly to which they can vote representatives and they are reduced merely to the position of well-favoured dogs who are kept quiet by having some fat bones thrown to them from time to time by their masters from the rich man's table. But once these bones are exhausted, the working-man begs for his bread in vain and must slave for a miserable pittance, or else enlist in the Red Army.

There was an attempt to hold an election for the local Soviets in Budapest. This was an utter farce as everything was controlled by the Government, backed by the bayonets of the Red Guards and no rival parties even dared to put up lists of candidates, so that in every case the Government's representatives were elected by acclamation without the necessity of even counting the votes. To keep up appearances and to camouflage this graft, in some districts of Budapest the Social Democrats and the Communists, who were working hand in glove, reunited by the visit of General Smuts, put up rival lists of candidates.

It would seem therefore that the proper definition of Bolshevism would be "the enslavement of the many by the few," and of a communist "someone who has nothing to share with the rest of the community." It is in fact nothing but a brutal tyranny forced on a nation in the guise of *liberté, égalité, fraternité*. As a Soviet régime rests on "no broad foundation of the people's will," the people having no say in the matter whatever, it can only be kept alive by a gigantic system of propaganda and terrorism combined.

Bolshevists themselves are the most miserable of mankind for they are ever engaged in a long, wearing struggle to conceal their own weakness and in a gigantic effort to bluff the proletariat into the belief that everything is being done for their exclusive benefit by benefactors who are working merely for love of freedom, but who cannot under any circumstances consult those in whose interest they profess to be working. They know in the end they are



doomed to failure. Bolshevism forbids any man, woman or child to think for himself; their thinking is done for them and instilled into them at the point of the bayonet. If free elections had been held in Hungary after one month of Bela Kuhn's régime, hardly a Bolshevik would have been returned at the polls outside of Budapest where a few might possibly have been elected in some of the poorer districts. But it is the first principle of Bolshevism that under no circumstances must the people be allowed a free expression of their political views. The leaders will tell you frankly that "the people are apt to make mistakes and really have no idea what is good and what is bad for them."

Thus, on April 10th, 1919, the Karolyi Government proposed to hold General Elections under a system of proportional representation, such as exists in Belgium. At the last moment, before the second revolution did away with any hope of establishing a Constitutional Government, the Extremist, Social, Democratic and Communist leaders openly announced that whatever the verdict of the electorate might be, they would take up arms and suppress the opposition parties by force!

Bolshevism means the elimination of any schools of thought which are not strictly in accordance with its principles. Under a Soviet régime the private individual becomes merely a dumb automaton amongst other dumb automata, who must swallow without reserve the entire catechism of Lenin and Trotsky, transmitted through agents such as Bela Kuhn, Pogany, Böehm, Szamuely and others. Thus in the place of general elections, Bolshevism relies on Red Guards and terrorism to maintain its hold on the populace.

The conservative nature of the Hungarian peasant character defeated the efforts of the Soviet Council in two important and essential aspects of Bolshevism. Communism or Bolshevism—for the two terms are now synonymous—allows of no private ownership either of

land, houses or chattels. Thus, one of the first acts of the Soviet Government was to inform the peasants who had long been clamouring for land, that they personally would not be given the land, but that it would be taken over by the State and they would be employed at prescribed rates of wages to cultivate it for the benefit of the whole community. This decree caused an immediate uproar and in parts of the country led to open rebellion. Thereupon the Government climbed down, rescinded the order and announced they would only communize the large estates and Church properties, leaving the small peasant proprietor in possession. The second defeat of the Soviet Government was the attempt of the Jewish Mafia in Budapest to abolish all religions and to do away with all services in the Churches. This became prematurely known and caused such an uproar amongst the Catholic peasants and workmen that the Government was again obliged to climb down and to announce publicly it was their fixed resolve to ensure to everybody in the land freedom of religious belief and of the right to worship.

But in order not to be baulked altogether in their fell purpose, the Bolshevists immediately started a tearing, raging propaganda against religion. Lectures were given in the schools; and the children were taught there is no God apart apparently from the guardian of the new idealism, which Bolshevism is supposed to create. The children were also told they must not obey their parents and that all disputes between parent and child must be submitted to the Children's Soviet Councils to adjudicate. It was the constant object of the Soviet Government to inoculate the younger generation with a hatred of any form of constituted authority and in pursuit of their purpose they did not hesitate to invade the privacy of the home. The schoolmasters were no longer allowed any authority over their pupils. The boys were ordered to elect councils and any disputes between the pupil and the teacher were submitted to this juvenile tribunal for settle-

ment. In their attitude towards religion, the Soviet Government apparently desired to eliminate Christianity altogether from the face of the earth, whether it be the Trinity of the Christians or the God of the Hebrews. They seemed to be equally impartial towards God the Father and God the Son and God the Holy Ghost.

It is one of the cardinal principles of Bolshevism to undermine the moral fibre of every man, woman and child, in order to force all through fear or self-interest to become the unwilling tools of the system. To obtain this result the favourite weapons are terrorism, the setting of class against class, and the breaking up of the home by setting the child against the parent.

Life under a Bolshevik régime is one long intolerable round of deception, suspicion, secret interviews, spying, whispering in corners, rumours, lies, fraud and deceit. Few dare to say what they really think, even to their best friend through fear lest the character of that friend has been undermined through misery or bribery. No man is sure of his neighbour. In Budapest there were thousands who, cordially detesting Bolshevism at heart, openly professed to adopt it, because their characters were not strong enough to swim any longer against the stream. There is no surer way of demoralizing and enslaving a community than by impoverishing it, and this is one of the first evils which Bolshevism brings about. Every individual in the State is made dependent on the Government for the barest means of sustenance. Hundreds and thousands of people in Budapest were reduced almost to starvation from competence by a stroke of the pen. They wandered round their former haunts like a flock of scared sheep, not knowing what to do. For a time they held out gallantly and pretended to laugh the matter off, hoping for the speedy return of better times. Then there came a moment when their last crown was spent and they found themselves without the proverbial "sou" with which to purchase bread. A man may have a wife and family

dependent on him, but although he is prepared to suffer hardships himself, he cannot bear the thought of their plight. At this moment the Bolshevist agent, who has been watching his victims closely, comes along and says: "Why don't you work for us? You could earn a lot of money as a spy in the circles you frequent." The victim hesitates for a time, but faced with starvation and ruin in the end he often succumbs. He spies on his former friends and acquaintances and swells the number of Bolshevist agents.

Another most dangerous individual, swarms of whom come to the front under a Soviet Government, is the "agent provocateur." He is generally a smart, well-dressed, plausible individual and when told off to look out for foreigners, he generally speaks several languages perfectly. He obtains an introduction and leaves his card. He usually opens up the conversation in this manner: "It would not do for me to be seen with you as we are both suspects," then launches forth on a vigorous denunciation of Bolshevism and groans audibly at the misfortunes which have overwhelmed his country. He passes on to the dangers which threaten Europe and the civilization of the world if the epidemic is allowed to spread. Having endeavoured to convince you that he cordially detests the whole movement, it is his object to induce you to state your opinion and confirm his own judgment. Having learned all he can, he hurries back to the police-station with the record of your words to file a denunciation.

Under a Bolshevist régime, you will be wise not to confide an important secret even to your oldest, lifelong friend. You can never tell how far these sinister influences may have been at work to undermine the moral fibre of his or her character.

This is not surprising when you have men and women born to every comfort and luxury obliged to beg for bread or for old clothes. It was the declared intention of the



Soviet Government to make every woman in Hungary, no matter what her social position had been in the past, work, otherwise she could obtain no food tickets and would speedily starve. But the Soviet fell before the scheme could be put into operation. Many women were, however, obliged to work as clerks or typists; others endeavoured to learn some trade, but for the vast majority there was no occupation open and few could foretell what their future would be. The lot of the men was no better. Ex-officers of the army, the peculiar "bête noire" of the Soviet Government, suffered every form of indignity and insult. At first they were allowed to hold no posts in the new Red Armies, except in the administrative departments, but when the Government realized its impotency to restore order out of chaos, it forced them back into the ranks. Those who refused to serve could be found cleaning boots in the streets or working on the land as common labourers, and considered themselves highly favoured by fortune if they could obtain the post of waiter in a hotel.

Above everything else Bolshevism is the triumph of ugliness and dirt. A city ruled by a Soviet Government speedily loses all order and cleanliness and every individual likewise seems to lose his or her sense of pride in appearance and habits. No man or woman dares wear his or her best clothes through fear of appearing hostile to the true faith. Old suits are therefore dragged out from retirement and old threadbare coats are utilized to give the former smart leaders of fashion some resemblance to the "Comrades," as a certain humorous American described the Bolsheviks. The women follow the same example. For some weeks a number made a gallant effort to appear smart and trim, but were then obliged to abandon the attempt as they attracted too much notice and invited too much criticism and were insulted in the streets. You would have imagined, had you seen Budapest under Bela Kuhn, that it contained the ugliest and most untidy population in the world. Every good-looking, honest,

hearty individual seemed to have left the town. Of course this was not really so, although an enormous number fled to the country or across the border. The effect on the mind is produced by the air of terror, sadness and despair which almost all have on their faces, by their ill-kempt, worn-out, threadbare clothes and by the entire absence of colour in any of the garments or hats of the women. Sombre drab was the order of the day and the only colours one ever saw in the town were the red flags; the red ties worn by everyone as a measure of protection; and the red on the uniforms of the Red Guards. Budapest was formerly one of the smiling towns of Europe. No one smiled during Bela Kuhn's reign, unless it were at some fresh act of absurdity committed by the Government. The streets, the hotels and the houses were filthily dirty and fell rapidly into decay.

Bolshevism spells lack of all discipline and authority. Servants would no longer work and the public services were neglected. The smart Ritz Hotel, for instance—after a month of Bolshevism—began to resemble an old inn fallen on evil days, owing to the decline in coaching. Beetles and mice invaded your rooms and wandered undisturbed across your floor, basking in the sunshine of their new-found liberty. The public trams were always packed, but the rolling stock was allowed to fall into such ruin that eventually the majority of the cars had to be taken off. The state of the chaos and the filth of the railroads baffles all description. All private motor-cars and hired taxis were immediately seized by the "Comrades" and were utilized by them for joy rides, looting expeditions, and to carry them to their offices, homes, or the theatres. Beautiful cars speedily became derelicts, battered about, covered with mud and robbed of their paint, as no care was taken of them. They were never washed and were driven about by amateur drivers at reckless speed. If one met with a mishap, it was left lying in the street and the occupants, if they were—as was generally the case—

government officials, communized another. Bolshevism is in fact a reckless orgy of waste and destruction.

How can one describe the faces of the leaders who ruled in Hungary! I shall be ever haunted by the recollection of them. Never surely before has any social upheaval brought together such a remarkable rogues' gallery of criminal Jewish types. Many an ugly man is honest and many an Adonis a crook, but the Soviet leaders in Budapest almost all had the air of many times convicted gaol birds and criminals. If such a tribe are destined to bring into the world a millenium of happiness and idealism, why then we must destroy and rewrite every learned work on physiognomy that has ever been written. To visit any of the public departments was an object lesson. In the ante-rooms you found the lesser minions and would-be office-seekers gathered. They all seemed to have sprung from the very dregs of society and to be animated by a hatred and dislike of everything normal or beautiful. Like a pack of ferocious and hideous hyenas, they gathered together for the express purpose of destroying anything that formerly made life pleasant and happy. They seemed determined to inflict as much suffering as possible on humanity in the short time in which they were allowed to exercise their evil sway.

A Bolshevik state lives under the rule of a small body of dictators who, after first obtaining possession of the machinery of government by force, keep themselves in power by terrorizing the people. The chief means to this end in Russia and Hungary had been the murder of the representatives of the so-called bourgeoisie class. In Hungary the "terror" was organized by Bela Kuhn, and his principal agents in carrying it into effect were a troop of murderers composed of the worst criminal elements in the land, who were known as "The Lenin Boys." They were placed under the command of Josef Cserni, an ex-sailor. Bela Kuhn entrusted this task to Cserni, whom he had known as a prisoner of war in Russia. It was the

especial duty of Cserni and his bloodthirsty gang to cause all those who were considered dangerous opponents of the Soviet to disappear.

Cserni's first step was to organize a troop of forty men, but he very soon found himself in command of two hundred. They were nearly all ex-gaol birds convicted of murder or robbery, who had been released from prison during the Karolyi régime, and employed to corrupt the loyalty of certain regiments at the front. All were well-known as reliable communists. Cserni only selected very big men with dark hair and fierce eyes, in order to give them a more savage appearance. Before being admitted to this "honourable employment" each man had to pass an examination to satisfy his masters that his Bolshevik faith was strong enough to enable him to carry out without hesitation or question the horrors he would be called upon to perform. In short this meant the cold-blooded murder of anyone who was considered dangerous to the Bolshevik cause. The men were formally guaranteed immunity from all punishment for murder, unless their actions involved the death of one of the Bolshevik leaders.

On the third day of Bolshevism, Cserni and his original troop were fully organized. They were given twenty-four motor cars and several wagons of ammunition; 14 mine-throwers of 6cm. and six of 9cm., several field guns, 24 machine guns, together with a proper quota of rifles, bayonets, and bombs. They were clad in a special uniform made of leather.

The first official residence of this gang of murderers was the Batthyany Palace in Budapest on the Theresa Ring. Here they remained until May 16th, when the Entente Missions urged Bela Kuhn in his own interests to dissolve this terror group. Bela Kuhn carried out this request in a simple and characteristic manner by changing their name and calling them "The Investigatory Troop of the Commissary of Home Affairs," and changing their residence from the Batthyany Palace to the Houses of



Parliament. Here they remained until the end of June when they were transferred to a house in the Mozdony Utca in Buda, nearer the seat of the Government. Meanwhile their numbers had greatly increased and they were given more motor cars, more guns, and even an armoured car.

Nearly all the atrocities committed under the Soviet Government were carried out by Cserni and his troops. They spied on the Counter-Revolutionists, arrested them without warrant, dragged them to the cellars of the Batthyany Palace and Houses of Parliament, and there without trial of any sort these unfortunate victims were beaten to death, shot or stabbed. The corpses remained for several days in these cellars, but when a sufficient number had been collected, they were thrown into the Danube.

With the fall of the Bolshevists, Cserni did not succeed in escaping from Hungary and was sentenced to death by a Hungarian Court in the winter of 1919. The judgment is numbered 8931-1919-80. He was condemned for personal murder and for organizing murders and massacres. He admitted at his trial that he had committed these crimes and had also instigated others to do the same. The number of murders proved varied from one to seven for each member of his troop, and the numbers which could not be proved amounted to over one thousand. Only 13 of the troop, however, could be condemned to death, through lack of legal proofs. One of them, a man called Charles Sturz admitted to 49 murders, and another man called Kerekes to 19.

The exact number of persons imprisoned or murdered by the Bolshevists, or who were made away with in Hungary, will probably never be accurately known. Hundreds disappeared and many never turned up again after the Bolshevists were driven out, and are now presumed to be dead. In many cases their families could never ascertain their fate or even when they had been arrested and by whom. Thousands of others were arrested, imprisoned for short periods and afterwards released.

The Courts subsequently tried or investigated 604 cases of proved murder, and the number of those who disappeared and who have never been heard of again is estimated at 6,000. Not a bad record this for a Government which only remained in power for four months!

In addition to these classes of prisoners, there were 489 prominent bourgeois arrested and held throughout the Soviet régime as hostages. Their gaolers, copying the Moscow precedent, amused themselves by threatening them with death. Almost daily, they were taken out into the prison courtyard, told they were about to be shot or hanged, then taken back again to the cells, after being informed their execution had been postponed until the following day. It would appear, however, that none of these hostages were actually put to death, and were all eventually released on the downfall of Bela Kuhn.

If Cserni was the official executioner under the Soviet, the brutal little Jew, Szamuely, may be described as "The People's Commissary for Terrorism." He was always foremost in advocating extreme measures against the aristocracy and bourgeoisie, and it was he who publicly announced he was in favour of a three days' indiscriminate looting of Budapest, in order to frighten the good citizens into submission. Szamuely was placed in charge of special troops with special trains ready at a moment's call, and with these troops he hastened from one part of the country to another to suppress local rebellions against the tyranny of the local Soviets, which were continually breaking out, more especially in the towns and villages of Western Hungary. On the arrival of Szamuely and his special train, the wildest consternation prevailed. The villagers and townspeople badly organized and ill-armed could not resist his well-equipped and well-disciplined forces. The rebellions were invariably crushed and then dire retribution descended on the unfortunate peasants. Many of those who had professed to be foremost in the rebellion local "agents provocateurs" now came for-

ward to denounce the ringleaders, some of whom were imprisoned, whilst others were shot.

But Szamuely, like so many others, was not destined to escape the just punishment for his crimes. He did not leave on July 31st for Vienna with the other Bolshevik leaders, as he was not in Budapest on that date, and his comrades were in such a hurry to get away with whole skins that they could not wait for him to travel in the special train, which conveyed them to the Austrian frontier.

Szamuely appears to have been in Western Hungary suppressing a counter-revolutionary movement there at this critical hour, and he tried to escape over the Austrian frontier as soon as he heard the "sad news" of the end of the Soviet dictatorship and the entry of the Rumanians into the capital. The Hungarian gendarmes of the old army, who at once reorganized themselves and took up their old duties without waiting for orders, on the dissolution of the Red Army, did their utmost to lay hold of Szamuely, whom they regarded as the worst blood-hound produced by the revolution, but he managed to conceal himself so well that they only caught a glimpse of him when he was actually crossing the Austrian frontier. This was near Lajta Ujfalu, not far from Wiener Neustadt. The Hungarian gendarmes fired and hit Szamuely, who struggled on and finally fell dead on Austrian territory. Happily, on the Austrian side there were no Volkswehr present, but only gendarmes who, with very few exceptions, were all ardent supporters of the old monarchy. They immediately agreed with the Hungarian gendarmes to say that Szamuely killed himself by committing suicide after his arrest with the aid of a small revolver, which, unfortunately, had not been found on him at the moment of his capture. Thus all frontier complications were avoided. The body was recognised and buried in Austria. The above-mentioned details are amongst the confidential accounts of the Viennese police.

## CHAPTER XV

### THE RUMANIAN OCCUPATION AND AFTER

THE average Englishman in his island home knows little or nothing of what is really passing on the Continent, except from scraps of information—very often inaccurate and prejudiced—he picks up from the daily perusal of the papers. He realizes the war has left his country the poorer by a million of her best men dead and seven thousand millions of debt, and that in consequence of the war he must now pay away from one-half to two-thirds of his annual income in taxes and also provide for some two millions of unemployed. These burdens are heavy enough in all conscience, but slowly and surely the normal, pre-war life of the Englishman is returning. There is no longer any shortage of the necessities of life—except cash—and prices are gradually falling; the same flag still proudly waves over his head; his constitution remains unchanged, his property rights remain untouched, and he does not live in the hourly fear of being ejected from his home, relieved of his property and driven into exile to some foreign land. The life of the Englishman of 1922 is the same as that of the Englishman of 1914 in all its material aspects, and it would appear as if his character had undergone but few modifications as a result of five years of war and close association with other nations on the battlefields of Europe. The average Englishman of 1922 has acquired a more pronounced dislike of mixing in Continental affairs and is likely to become more insular than ever in the future, but unfortunately the Treaties of



Versailles, the Trianon, Sèvres, and Neuilly chain England to the Juggernaut of European politics and racial hatreds, and we cannot escape from the joint liabilities we have entered into with other peoples who fought side by side with us in the World War.

Therefore it is only fair to bear in mind that other nations not only suffer from the same aftermath of enormous taxation and unemployment as ourselves, but have to bear an additional load of intolerable burdens which make life hardly worth living, throughout two-thirds of Europe. Millions of men and women have been forced to begin a new life under a new flag, and often the new flag is that of their most bitter and inveterate enemy of the past; private property in many countries has ceased to be respected, or only a modicum is left to the owners; incomes have almost vanished owing to the fall in the exchanges; there is a shortage of the necessities of life in many lands and in others the rise in prices and fall in the purchasing power of the currency have reduced the home to penury. Commerce and industry have come to a standstill owing to the arbitrary separation of States into watertight compartments of political and racial hate, each with a different currency and different tariffs; raw materials are lacking in some countries and over plentiful in others, and factories are idle because the new Treaties have cut them off from their natural sources of supply. When in addition to these material difficulties it is borne in mind that personal liberty has almost ceased to exist under a mass of vexatious restrictions and that an exaggerated passport system practically closes the frontiers to the majority of those whose affairs formerly extended through the dominions of the old Austro-Hungarian Empire, the Englishman should at least be content with his lot.

When the Soviet leaders fled from Budapest on July 31st, 1919, they left Hungary on the verge of ruin. It did not seem possible that the State could bear any further misfortune without collapsing altogether under the strain.

Two-thirds of her territory were occupied by Rumanians, Yugo-Slavs, and Czech troops; her agriculture was disorganized and her industries at a standstill; her currency was ever falling and almost valueless outside of her own frontiers; there was no regular Government in power and the whole country swarmed with roving bands of demobilized Red troops or hastily-organized, ill-disciplined White Guards, and the entire community was distracted by various currents of political thought. Above all there was no strong man to take the helm of State.

On the fall of the Soviet Government, a vast number of refugees began to make their way back home again. What did they find? In Budapest their houses and apartments still occupied by working-men, their wives and families, or else filled with loafers and ne'er-do-wells; their furniture smashed or missing and their linen in shreds or black from improper uses; their silver and valuables stolen—unless they had been previously hidden or buried—their pictures and objets d'art missing or else placed in public collections, from which they had subsequently to be sorted out; as for the money they had left in the banks, that had long since been confiscated. Those who possessed country estates found the same evidences of the ruin brought about by the occupation of the Jewish overseers, the carefully-built-up system of agricultural production fallen into decay; carriages, carts and machines smashed or stolen, horses and cattle either missing or sent elsewhere, and the houses in a filthy state with the furniture stolen or deposited in the houses of the people in the neighbouring villages.

The first step of each returning refugee was to examine his personal losses and then to try and obtain re-possession of his house or apartment and to recover such of his stolen property as could be traced. In Budapest there was a kind of "general post" or sorting out of the population, and an effort was made to force the invaders of the West End to return to their own dwellings, in order to make room for the legitimate owners, and also to provide accom-

modation for the immense numbers of refugees who had fled to the capital from the occupied territories. This was a long and arduous task, for the people had become so mixed up and out of hand after four months of Bolshevism that it was difficult to enforce obedience to the laws.

The first step taken by Frederick's Government, which came into power on the flight of Bela Kuhn, was to reorganize the old Police Force, to restore some sort of order and discipline in Budapest and to arrest the active agents of the Soviet régime all over Hungary—or rather, in those restricted districts of Hungary which were not occupied by the troops of the Little Entente. There followed, as was inevitable under the circumstances, a bitter reaction against those who had brought such ruin on the country. But the "White Terror," as it was called, was greatly exaggerated at the time, although there were abuses which could not be checked.

Each town, village and commune proceeded to arrest and imprison the local agents of the Bolsheviks, the "agents provocateurs," local Commissaries and "Red Guards," who had played a prominent rôle under Bela Kuhn. In some instances, men who had betrayed others and had thus caused them to be executed by Cserni's Lenin Boys or Szamuely's Preventative Troops were taken out and shot or hanged after the barest form of trial, for the fury of the local population against their oppressors could not be suppressed.

There was, in fact, a general clearing up of Bolsheviks and criminals throughout the land, for numbers of the latter had been released under Bela Kuhn and they had to be hunted up and replaced in their cells to complete their sentences. With the return of the criminals from their pleasant and profitable holiday and with the addition of an enormous number of Bolsheviks, every prison in the land became overcrowded and in a few weeks Hungary became the most crimeless of countries.

But no sooner had the unhappy Hungarians got rid of

Bela Kuhn and Co., placed his minions safely under lock and key, and proceeded to put their houses and estates in order, than they found themselves in the clutches of a still more deadly enemy, who occupied what remained of their territories between the River Tisza in the east to the River Raba in the west, from August 4th, 1919, to November 18th, 1919.

During this period of four months the Rumanians inflicted more damage on the country than the Bolsheviks had ever succeeded in doing. The latter upset the constitution, stole private property, allowed the highly organized system of agriculture to fall into decay and imprisoned thousands, but their depredations and crimes were committed within the country itself and what they stole they were obliged to leave behind on their departure, as they could not carry a tenth of their booty away. Jewels and "objets d'art" were carried or smuggled over the frontiers and never seen again, but such personal belongings only form an infinitesimal percentage of the real wealth of a country and are not essential to its economic recovery.

The Rumanians, however, commenced a systematic sack of the occupied territories, claiming as their justification that the Hungarians had treated their country in exactly the same way during Mackensen's invasion and occupation in 1916-1917. Human nature being what it is and the desire for revenge ever paramount, it is difficult to blame the Rumanians who had seen their country invaded and oppressed only two years before, but all that took place in the midst of war, and it must not be forgotten that the Rumanians occupied Budapest and turned out the Bolsheviks under a mandate from the Entente, and the Entente was pledged to respect the Armistice agreement under which Hungary had laid down her arms in October, 1918. Therefore the Entente must bear the responsibility for the non-fulfilment of the agreement and for the systematic looting and laying waste of Hungary,



in which the Rumanians indulged from August to November of 1919.

The Big Four made no real effort to check the depredations of the invaders and it was only after the arrival of Sir George Clerk as High Commissioner that a firm stand was made against the sacking of Hungary, the like of which has not been seen since the days of Attila the Hun.

The first step of the Rumanians was to lay their hands on what remained of Hungary's sadly depleted rolling-stock, together with the majority of the engines, and to send them back to Rumania. These trains were not sent back empty, but were packed with loot from town, village and hamlet. They stripped the big estates and large farms of wagons, carriages, and agricultural machinery; they stole the furniture and household effects, and they made a clean sweep of horses, cattle, pigs, and even of geese and chickens. They took away machinery from the factories, even when it was of no use to them, and wantonly destroyed much of what was left. They maltreated the local population—especially in Transylvania—and levied contributions in cash on the towns and villages.

Week after week these trainloads of loot crept eastwards. Finally things reached such a point that the Entente Representatives in Budapest, backed by the Big Four in Paris, had to resort to open threats to stop the Rumanian depredations. The whole economic life of the country came to a standstill, and the big towns were in danger of starving, owing to the failure of food supplies and the lack of all means of transport from the country districts. At one time there was only a single train and two engines left to carry on services between Budapest and the Austrian frontier. There is no darker page in the history of the war than the occupation of Hungary by the Rumanian troops throughout those four months of 1919. And if ever a people fell out of the frying pan into the fire, it was the unfortunate Hungarians when Bela Kuhn left on July 31st and the

Rumanians entered on August 4th, 1919. Only that portion of Hungary which lies between the Raba and the Austrian frontier escaped the horrors of the Rumanian occupation.

On November the 17th, the day following the departure of the Rumanians, the Hungarian forces under the command of Admiral Horthy entered Budapest, and from that day to the present time the Admiral has remained the nominal ruler of the country. A few words on his previous career may not be out of place.

In 1914 Horthy was Captain and A.D.C. to the Emperor Franz Joseph. At the beginning of the war he was given the command of the cruiser "Novara," and carried out some successful raids against the Italian coast. In February, 1918, after revolutionary riots had broken out in the Navy at Bocce di Cattaro and Pola, most of the senior admirals were pensioned off and the young Emperor Karl appointed Horthy Admiral and Commander-in-Chief of the whole fleet. This was unheard of promotion in one so young. After the collapse of the Monarchy and the signing of the Armistice, Horthy, acting under the instructions of the General Staff, handed over the Navy to the newly created Yougo-Slav State and then repaired to Vienna to announce to the Emperor the fulfilment of this sad duty.

This audience took place on November 8th, 1918, and Horthy then formally promised the Emperor that whatever his position might be in the future he would do his utmost to resist the Revolution and to restore the King to his rights as soon as possible. It is because of this interview and promises made to the Emperor that so much bitterness of feeling has been aroused against the Admiral amongst the Legitimists, who declare that he betrayed his trust and broke his oath in not handing over the reins of government to the Emperor Karl on the occasion of his two attempts to regain the throne. But these questions will be dealt with in subsequent chapters.

The Emperor having implicit trust in the Admiral used all his influence with the Government formed at Szeged to obtain a prominent command for Horthy. He was first appointed Minister of War and subsequently Commander-in-Chief of the forces in Szeged. Owing to the action of the French, the Counter-Revolutionary forces in Szeged were destined to play no part in ridding Hungary of the Bolsheviks and it was left to the Rumanians to turn out the common enemy. In August, 1919, the Admiral Horthy and his troops made their way from Szeged to Siofiok on the Lake of Balaton, where they remained until the departure of the Rumanians from Budapest on November 16th, 1919.

Thus it will be seen that the rôle played by the Admiral up to this time has been useful if not actively important. Nevertheless he had made himself extremely popular with the younger officers of the army and had acquired a certain reputation as "The Saviour of His Country" amongst the people.

In February, 1920, the first elections were held since the Revolution to elect representatives to a National Assembly, which was to decide on the future constitution of Hungary and to nominate a representative government with which the Entente would be prepared to negotiate a treaty of peace. As the Entente would not consent to the return of the Emperor Karl, it became necessary to elect someone as Regent. The choice fell on Admiral Horthy because he had the country behind him, was popular with the army, and was known to enjoy the confidence of the exiled Emperor. He was therefore elected Governor and Regent of Hungary on March 7th, 1921, with only seven dissenting votes.

Sir George Clerk, the present British Minister in Prague, played a very prominent rôle in the negotiations which led up to the formation of this first National Assembly. One of the most experienced diplomats in the British Service, he was sent out to Hungary as special

representative of the Entente, and arrived at Budapest on October 23rd, 1919. His instructions were to urge the formation of a coalition government in Hungary representing all classes which could carry through elections on a secret ballot and thus form a National Assembly which would then elect a government with which the Entente could treat.

The mission of Sir George Clerk was not an easy one, but was carried through with great tact and discernment. The Entente imagined that Hungary was ripe for a great constitutional change on ultra democratic lines, because the country had passed through the fires of Bolshevism; whereas, in reality, the country having suffered so much under Bela Kuhn, was passing through a period of reaction and the Socialists, on whom the Entente greatly relied, were discredited. The Socialist leaders had, with very few exceptions, been mixed up with the Bolshevik régime, and were therefore out of court for the time being. The majority of the workmen were fed up with their leaders who had led them into Bolshevism and then, instead of providing the promised paradise, had reduced them to penury, semi-starvation and ruin.

But the Big Four, hopelessly ignorant of what had passed in Hungary and of the mentality of the Hungarian peasant, thought they were acting in the interests of the mass of the people by insisting that the Socialists should be included in the new Government which was to organize the elections for the new National Assembly.

Sir George Clerk, with great tact, treated with all the Hungarian political parties and tried his utmost to bring about a compromise. He also tried successfully to check the forces of reaction which were at work; the extremists' leaders wishing to hang all Socialists at sight and to prohibit the formation of Workmen's Syndicates and Socialist Party organizations.

On the other hand, he did his best to induce the Socialist leaders to co-operate with a Government in which



the majority of the Ministers were ultra-Conservative. Sir George Clerk, in fact, really and truly acted as an "honest broker" amongst the Hungarian political parties, and in the end his labours were rewarded by the formation of a Coalition Ministry with Charles Husar as Prime Minister, which all the Conservative and Bourgeois parties promised to recognise and support until after the elections for the new National Assembly. The Socialists also promised to remain neutral. Sir George Clerk then officially recognised this Government, and left Budapest.

During his short stay in the capital, Sir George Clerk made himself extremely popular with all parties and did his utmost to lessen the severity and to shorten the period of the Rumanian occupation. It is a pity he was not sent back as British Minister, as he enjoyed the respect and confidence of all.

The elections for the National Assembly were held two months after his departure and no Socialist representative was returned at the polls. The Socialists, in fact, did not vote at this election, but handed in blank voting forms. Eighty thousand of such blank forms were found in the urns, representing roughly the number of Socialists in the country at this time.

Thus closed the year 1919, the most tragic in Hungarian history.

## CHAPTER XVI

### THE FIRST ATTEMPT OF THE EMPEROR KARL TO REGAIN HIS THRONE

(Related by A. Boroviczeny, A.D.C. to the Emperor Karl.)  
*In March, 1921*

MANY details of the events in March and October, 1921, in connection with the two attempts of the Emperor to regain his throne, cannot yet be published, because most of the persons concerned in those events are still active in politics, or are in exile, and the historical documents which explain the reasons for certain actions must remain secret. But everything related here can be confirmed by documents, which are in our possession, and the names of those persons who played an active rôle given when the right moment comes.

After prolonged negotiations with authorized representatives of one of the Great Powers of the Entente—the result of which was the assurance that the Great Powers would recognise a “fait accompli” in Hungary—the Emperor Karl decided to return to Hungary quite alone, without warning anyone in advance of his decision.

His Majesty's reasons for this secrecy were firstly to avoid placing the responsibility for his actions on others, and secondly, because of the complete trust he had in Admiral Horthy, whom he believed to be absolutely faithful to his cause. Admiral Horthy swore, on November 8th, 1918, that whenever he was in a position to fight against the Revolution, he would do everything to

help His Majesty to regain his throne. From September, 1919—when he was appointed Commander of the Hungarian Army—and from March, 1920—after his election as Regent of Hungary—Horthy was sending periodical reports to the King-Emperor and assuring him of his loyalty and how he was constantly working on his behalf.

In the late Spring of 1920, His Majesty sent a letter to Horthy, ordering him to redouble his efforts in favour of the Restoration, as within one year he intended to make the attempt.

Horthy's official "officier de liaison" at His Majesty's Court was at this time Baron Jules Bornemisa, the Hungarian Minister in Switzerland.

Unhappily Horthy's entire entourage in Budapest consisted of ardent anti-legitimists and there was a mafia around him which in the Admiral's name stopped all propaganda on behalf of the King, but permitted it against the Restoration. Among the most bitter opponents of the Monarchy was Horthy's wife's nephew—Eckhardt—who on account of his relationship to the Regent was given the position of Press-censor, and had absolute power over all the papers. Eckhardt, together with all Horthy's A.D.C.'s, namely, Captain Magashazy, First Lieutenant Gorgei, and Naval Lieutenant Hardy, were all adherents of the theory that after the Revolution the Monarchy had ceased to exist and that Hungary had the right to elect a new King. Being Republicans at heart, they really wanted to keep Horthy in power, knowing that if he went they would lose their positions. Captain Kozma, the chief of the Hungarian Telegraph Agency, was also one of their partisans. All these were young men who came to the front during the Revolution, and belonged to the Szeged Army. They all spoke of the King without the slightest respect, and in the Press and in their speeches they directed an intensive campaign against him. Horthy made no effort to check their activities and pretended not to know anything about their actions.

Another of Horthy's most intimate friends and councillors was Gombos, formerly Captain in the Army, then Member of Parliament, one of the most influential and open opponents of His Majesty.

The Emperor Karl was well informed of the hostile attitude of Horthy's entourage and of the propaganda carried on against him, but in spite of these unfavourable proofs, he trusted Horthy personally. The admiral owed his rapid advancement entirely to the Emperor; it seemed impossible for an honest man in his position to forget his duty towards his King and benefactor. Now His Majesty, knowing very well that the whole entourage of Horthy was against him, determined not to send any written messages announcing his return. He was certain Horthy's followers would leave no stone unturned to prevent the Regent from handing over the government, as such a step would mean the end of their own careers and ambitions. So His Majesty, trusting Horthy absolutely, decided to return to Hungary without the knowledge of Horthy's entourage. We will show how the Regent betrayed his confidence. It must be fully realized, that His Majesty had absolute guarantees from Briand's Cabinet that he had nothing to fear from the Little Entente. The Great Powers would merely protest, as when King Constantine returned to Greece, their only aim being to avoid war.

His Majesty's journey from Switzerland to Vienna was only made possible through French aid, and true details cannot yet be disclosed, through fear of compromising those who assisted him. On reaching Vienna he went straight to the apartment of Count Erdody, which is in a remote quarter of the city, and asked the Count to arrange his journey to Hungary. Count Erdody had not been advised of his coming and needed twenty-four hours in which to make his preparations. His Majesty and Count Erdody left Vienna in a motor-car, and passed the Hungarian frontier at Pinkafo, near Erdody's country place,



and from there they journeyed to the big town of Szombathely in a peasant's carriage. On Good Friday evening, March 25th, 1921, His Majesty arrived at the Palace of Bishop Mikes, who knew nothing of his return and did not recognise him for some minutes, until the King disclosed his identity. Amongst the Bishop's guests for Easter was Minister Vas, a clergyman, who declared without hesitation that Horthy's Cabinet had no longer any mandate to govern the country now that the Crowned and Sacred King had returned. Minister Vas thereupon handed in his resignation to the King telling him that if His Majesty called upon him to take office again, he would willingly accept any post.

The Prime Minister, Count Paul Teleki, was spending the Easter holidays at Count Sigray's country place, near Szombathely in Ivancz, shooting snipe, together with the American High-Commissioner, Mr. Grant-Smith. Teleki and Sigray were summoned to come to Szombathely during the night and arrived at about 2 a.m. The Prime Minister, Count Teleki, Minister Vas, Count Sigray, the Governor of Western Hungary, Bishop Count Mikes and Colonel Lehar, Commander of the Division in Szombathely, then held a consultation. Count Teleki advised the Emperor to advance on Budapest without delay and take over the Government, or else to return to Switzerland before the news of his arrival became public. It was finally decided to go to Pest, as no one doubted at this moment that Horthy would hand over the Government to His Majesty. It was arranged for Teleki to start first in a motor-car, in order to prepare Horthy for the coming of the King, who was timed to arrive two hours later by car.

Unfortunately these plans miscarried, for Teleki's car missed the way and had two or three punctures, so that he reached Pest almost an hour after His Majesty. The Emperor was accompanied by Colonel Jarmy and arrived at Pest without having been recognised en route. They stopped at the residence of the Prime Minister, and asked

for Teleki to learn his news, and then found that he had not yet arrived. The Emperor then sent Colonel Jarmy to the Royal Palace to announce his arrival to Horthy and followed him a few minutes later into Horthy's study where the Admiral, on hearing of His Majesty's arrival, had already had a discussion with the Vice-President of his military office, Lieutenant-Colonel Fischer, one of the bitterest opponents of the Monarchy. Everybody was sent out of the room, but Magashazy, Horthy's A.D.C., and Gombos (who was brought by Countess Bethlen in a car as soon as she heard from Horthy's second A.D.C., Captain Gorgei, by telephone the startling news) listened at a back door to the conversation which took place between His Majesty and Horthy. The rôle played by Countess Bethlen was related by one of her most intimate friends, who is a high official in the Hungarian Foreign Office.

His Majesty summoned Horthy to hand him over the government and told him, after the Regent had pointed out the dangers of an invasion by the Little Entente, that he had guarantees from a great power (France) that the "fait accompli" would be recognised and that war would be avoided.

Then Horthy told the Emperor that he could not resign the Regency without the assent of the National Assembly, which had elected him and before which he had sworn an oath of fidelity. His Majesty replied that he was the King by right, crowned by Parliament, and that the National Assembly had no power to alter the Constitution, and had never, as a matter of fact, dethroned him, only substituting a Regent as long as the King had ceased to rule through "force majeure," and it was not only His Majesty's right, but also his duty, to return home and re-establish the legal continuity of the dynasty. He pointed out also that Horthy himself had sworn faith and obedience when he appointed him Admiral-in-Chief of the Fleet. The latter replied that he could no longer

adhere to his old oath, as since then he had sworn a second one as Regent of Hungary before the National Assembly, and thus considered himself released from his oath to His Majesty. The Emperor replied that he alone had the power to release him, and made an appeal to Horthy's promise given on November 8th, 1918, in Schönbrunn, to do his utmost to restore the monarchy.

Unfortunately His Majesty had not slept for the past three nights, had travelled for several days under very exacting conditions, and was completely exhausted. In his own words to his friends afterwards he described how he became weaker and weaker as Horthy's resistance grew. As soon as the Regent noticed this, he began to picture to the King the dangers of a war with the Little Entente, spoke of the military weakness of the Hungarian Army, which was not in a position to fight, being insufficiently equipped and armed, and whose discipline was weakened by two revolutions, and he earnestly requested the King to abandon his plan and leave the country.

At length His Majesty, influenced by these arguments, promised Horthy he would return to Szombathely. There he said he would assemble Colonel Lehar's troops and march on Vienna, backed by the whole Hungarian Army, which, however weak, seemed strong enough to operate against Austria. Thus the Restoration would be made in Austria first, as the Little Entente had not threatened to invade that country. Then, later on, the Emperor declared he would march to Budapest. Horthy, apparently to humour the Emperor, promised to keep the matter a profound secret, in order not to compromise the success of the expedition against Vienna, although he must have fully realized the futility of such an attempt.

On parting, His Majesty handed Horthy the Grand-Cross of the Maria-Theresa, which Horthy accepted with gratitude. I shall have more to say later on this subject.

This conversation was related to the writer of these lines by His Majesty, the Emperor-King, at different times, and by Horthy on April 19th, 1921.

The Emperor then entered his car without having been recognised and drove back to Szombathely, where, to his great astonishment, a telegram from Horthy to Colonel Lehar had preceded him, ordering Lehar to force His Majesty to continue his journey across the Austrian frontier that very day. Lehar of course refused to execute this order, but showed it to the King. In any case the Emperor could not have proceeded. It was a stormy, cold March day, and Horthy had not thought of offering His Majesty a fur-coat or even a rug, and having but a very thin coat, he arrived half-frozen at Szombathely. Very indignant at Horthy's breach of promise, he telegraphed to Budapest, ordering him as his Admiral, to hand over the Government at once. Horthy replied that he was willing to do so and asked to whom His Majesty would trust the chief command of the Army, and whom he would appoint as Prime Minister. His Majesty replied he would take General Lukasich as Commander of the Army, and Sigray or Vas as his Prime Minister. Horthy's answer came within a few minutes that under those circumstances he could not hand over the Government. Once again he begged His Majesty to leave the country and announced that the Entente had learnt of his presence and had protested against his restoration.

The copies and reports of these conversations and telegrams are in the hands of reliable persons and can be produced at any time. His Majesty learned in Szombathely that Lehar's troops possessed only 1,500 rifles, and though this force would be sufficient for an attempt through loyal Styria against Vienna, they would not suffice for an operation against Budapest, and under no circumstances did His Majesty wish to start an internecine war, which would have been playing into the hands of the Little Entente.

His Majesty declared he would leave the country if his presence really meant danger to Hungary, but for the present he did not see any necessity, and as a Hungarian he





ADMIRAL HORTHY  
Regent of Hungary



had indisputable right to remain on Hungarian territory to await a suitable moment to regain his throne.

Now Horthy, through his General Staff, sent day after day the most fantastic military reports about the mobilisation against Hungary by the Little Entente. But they forgot that the division at Szombathely under Lehar received the true reports of the Intelligence Office, and from them it was learnt that no military preparations whatever had taken place in the neighbouring countries. The false game of the Hungarian Government was now clear.

His Majesty then fell ill. He had caught cold on his motor trip coming from Budapest, and had to stay in bed for a few days, so there could be no question of his immediate departure.

In the meantime he was bombarded with requests from Budapest, urging him to leave the country. The Government secured the Entente's guarantee for his safe passage through Austria and his reception in Switzerland.

When at last the secret reports of the General Staff told of the first sign of mobilisation, namely, the appearance of a strong cavalry division of the Serbians in Szabadka (Hungarian territory occupied by Serbs) His Majesty consented to travel back to Switzerland and left Szombathely on April 5th by special train under the protection of foreign officers.

#### *The Grand-Cross of the Maria-Theresa Order.*

Horthy declared in the Hungarian "White Book" relating to the two attempts of the Emperor to regain his throne, that at Easter His Majesty wanted to give him the Grand-Cross of the Maria-Theresa, but that he would not accept it. The truth is that he asked for it.

Conforming to the rules governing the highest military order of the old Monarchy, every officer, who acting on his own initiative in war performed some action which decisively influenced the operations, had the right to ask for this decoration. Horthy asked for it during the war.

Now all those claims are examined by the Chapter of the Order, and the Chapter recommends the Emperor to decorate the officers who have been found worthy of it. But the Emperor retains the right to give a higher or lower class of the decoration, or not to give it at all. In Horthy's case the recommendation had not been made at Easter, 1921, as there were so many claims that the Chapter had not finished its work. But His Majesty gave Horthy the Grand-Cross on his own authority. In May, 1921, the findings of the Chapter reached His Majesty in Switzerland, proposing for Horthy, who had not established his claims to the Grand-Cross, the Middle-Cross. There were about fifty findings on the list of the Chapter and His Majesty signed them "en bloc." The Chapter informed Horthy that he had been awarded the Middle-Cross. The Regent then sent ex-Minister Dr. Gratz to His Majesty on September 4th, 1921, with the request that His Majesty would be gracious enough to stand by his first decision and alter the proposition of the Chapter in such a way that he could keep the Grand-Cross. This demand of Horthy's was announced to His Majesty by M. Boroviczeny, who was in Hertenstein. His Majesty decided to postpone the matter for the time being. The attitude of Horthy in this affair shows clearly how ambiguous was his behaviour towards the King and his own political adherents, and how trustworthy his declarations concerning his deeds were!



## CHAPTER XVII

### THE SECOND ATTEMPT OF THE EMPEROR KARL TO REGAIN HIS THRONE, AND HIS UNTIMELY DEATH

(Related by A. Boroviczeny, A.D.C. to the Emperor Karl.)  
*In October, 1921*

THE effect of His Majesty's sudden appearance in Hungary in March, 1921, had one very good result. The whole population was reminded that it had a crowned King in exile, whose return would be a great advantage to Hungary, in spite of the propaganda of the Republicans, who tried to educate the nation in the belief that Hungary's salvation could only be found in a Republic with a President elected for life. The strong dynastic movement in those parts of old Hungary under foreign occupation at the moment of the King's arrival, although not generally known, made it clear that the Emperor could restore the territorial integrity of the country much sooner than Horthy or any other President of the Republic. This spontaneous movement in the separated territories proved that the Emperor had a much larger following than the new régime and that his mere appearance threatened to do away with the "fruits of the Revolution."

Horthy's régime brought neither peace nor consolidation to mutilated Hungary. A silly persecution of Jews, many murders and much stealing of the State's goods and money were its prominent features. The currency fell and the country grew poorer and poorer. Political murders were frequent and no attempt was made to bring the

criminals to justice; there was little security before the law; the Army did nothing except to maltreat the civilian population and steal goods in transport from the merchants, which they were supposed to guard, and yet no one was ever punished for these outrages and thefts. The sanctity of the private home was not respected, except those of the supporters of the Republicans, and the Army became the guard of a political party instead of a defence for the nation. All these abuses under the Horthy régime made people long for the return of the legitimate King. In political circles the restoration was the chief topic of conversation, and the object of long negotiations with the Government, which pretended to be legitimist and to wish as ardently for it as the "legitimists" themselves.

The King kept in close touch with the politicians and was well informed about everything that happened in Hungary. The Government pretended to be obliged to keep secret all relations with the King, on account of the "Little Entente" and the hostile attitude of the Republicans, of whom Horthy and the Government were afraid. In reality the Republican party had few adherents in the country, the elections for the National Assembly having taken place at a time when there was no question of a Republic and everybody thought the "legitimist" solution the only possible one after the success of the Counter-Revolution. At the elections in February, 1920, the question of an alternative Government never arose, and the first law passed by the Assembly provided for a Regent to govern the State during the King's enforced absence. There was never any question of de-throning the legitimate line of rulers. After these elections, the partisans of a small group of adventurers found out that if they wished to rule the country to their own advantage, they must keep the King in exile. Thus they formed a coalition with the party of the Small Proprietors, which declared itself openly anti-legitimist, though they had not received any mandate whatever on the question

from their electors. Thus the Government, which dethroned the legitimate King in November, 1921, after his second attempt, went to the poll in May, 1922, for the elections to the new National Assembly, pretending to be "legitimist" and deliberately misled the electors. The Government's supporters openly declared they had fired on the King and Queen in October, 1921, in order to save them!

It was quite clear in the Summer of 1921 that Horthy and his Government would never recall the King whatever they might promise the loyalists, as none of the agreements between the Government and the "Legitimists" were ever kept by Count Bethlen, who had become Prime Minister.

In August, 1921, there were negotiations between Bethlen and Horthy on one side, and Andrassy and Gratz, acting for the King, on the other. The Government proposed to dismiss the Regent's A.D.C.'s, who were politicians instead of officers, to guarantee that there would be no attempt to dethrone the Emperor and to stop the propaganda against him and his family. They undertook to form a proper army and not merely a political guard. None of these promises was ever kept. On the contrary all the officers who refused to give an oath to obey *only* and *under all circumstances* the Regent, even in case of His Majesty's return, were dismissed from the Army. The propaganda against the Emperor was redoubled and the censorship of the Press became more insupportable than ever. The political A.D.C.'s of the Governor were all confirmed in their posts and the "terror formations," like the one of Lt. Hejjas, whose followers committed 142 proved murders, were pardoned, as they were proved adversaries of the Emperor.

A great number of the Army officers, seeing that within a short time they would be dismissed if they did not make common cause with the Republicans, urged the return of the Emperor, declaring that otherwise within a few months

the whole Army would be Republican and the old officers and their families left to starve in some workhouse. Bankers and merchants urged the return also, saying that under the existing régime the ruin of commerce was certain within a few years.

Thus an officers' organization resolved in October, 1921, to proceed with the Restoration, and invited some of the most distinguished politicians to place themselves at His Majesty's disposition on his arrival in Hungary.

In the meantime the Emperor remained in communication with some of the representatives of the Great Powers, and kept in touch with his partisans in the States of the old Monarchy, so as to ensure the neutrality of the Little Entente. These organizations would have stopped all operations on the very day war was declared. But these details cannot be published yet, owing to the security of those involved.

Thus in October the Emperor Karl decided to make his final effort to regain his throne.

October 20th, 1921, was a typical autumn day, when the motor car—an Austro-Daimler phaeton—containing Boroviczeny and Baron Schager passed out of Zurich at 9.30 a.m. There was a dense fog over the country, so that one could hardly see twenty yards ahead. The car left Zurich by the lake road, making towards its eastern end, where the little town of Rapperswyl guards the bridge across the extreme end of the lake of Zurich. Before reaching Rapperswyl, one has to pass Ulster, a little market town. Between those two villages another car met Boroviczeny's on the high road, containing the Emperor Karl and the Empress Zita, who had come from Hertenstein, accompanied by His Majesty's A.D.C., Count Ledochowski. Their Majesties quickly left their car and entered Boroviczeny's, which at once started back towards Zurich and reached Dubendorf, the aerodrome, at 12 p.m. Every precaution was taken to keep the departure of the King and Queen a secret, so that it should not become public until



their arrival in Hungary. The chauffeurs had no idea where they were going. The members of the Imperial household were equally ignorant.

At Dubendorf, the aeroplane—a Junker monoplane made of aluminium and containing four seats in a closed cabin and two seats for the pilots—awaited the travellers. Three pilots were in attendance, two Hungarian air-officers, Captains Fekete and Alexay, and the pilot of the aeroplane in Switzerland, Capt. Zimmermann.

The monoplane started at 12.14, piloted by Zimmermann and Fekete. Their Majesties sat in the cabin behind Boroviczeny and Alexay, who both carried maps to control the route taken by the machine. The motor-car, which brought Their Majesties to Dubendorf, was taken away the same day by Baron Schager and passed the Austrian frontier two hours later.

At about 11.30 the fog cleared and disclosed the magnificent aspect of the Alps throughout the journey. The monoplane first flew towards the lake of Constance, passed Bregenz, then over Bavarian territory, leaving Kempten to the right, over Füssen and Rosenhaim, and crossing the Austrian frontier north of Salzburg, struck the Danube near Linz. The Danube was followed as far as St. Polten, where the course was changed towards Wr. Neustadt. Then the Hungarian frontier was passed and Lake Ferto sighted. South of this lake, on one of the big agricultural lands of Count Cziraky, in the proximity of his Castle Denesfa, the aeroplane landed at 4.24 p.m. The journey from Zurich to Denesfa, near the Western Hungarian town of Szombathely, lasted four hours and ten minutes.

The flight was successful, in spite of a little accident over Bavarian territory, where the motor suddenly stopped. The petrol was of poor quality and the opening for the exit of the gas to the cylinder got blocked by soot. But the excellent construction of the motor and the presence of mind of the pilots saved the situation. Gas was cut off from the motor and repeatedly let in again with force, so

that the soot was cleared out by the pressure of the gas and the motor drew again regularly. The only effect was a loss of one thousand metres in height, which was quickly regained. The average height of the flight was 3,500 metres and the speed 170 kilometres per hour. As soon as the Danube was reached, the pilots noticed that the motor was losing water out of the radiator. But except for these disagreeable incidents nothing serious happened.

Their Majesties were first taken to the Castle of Count George Cziraky, and during the same night to Sopron (Odenburg), where they were awaited by the loyal battalion of Colonel Ostenburg and some of the Ministers of His Majesty's last Hungarian Cabinet, and other Councillors.

After the excitements of the flight, Their Majesties had to pass almost the whole night in the motor car and only reached Sopron at 5 a.m., where there were no rooms prepared for them, as the whole town had been evacuated on account of the Austrian invasion, which had taken place only a few days before. At last one room in the barracks was sufficiently furnished with two beds and some chairs to allow the King and Queen a few hours' repose after their exciting journey.

But their rest was not long. As soon as the Commander of the town, General Hegedus, heard of their arrival, he hurried up to assure them of his loyalty and to renew his military oath. He told them that not only the whole garrison, but the whole district, acknowledged His Majesty as their Sacred and Crowned King.

The day was taken up with a review of the troops and conferences with politicians and generals. Many deputations came to render homage to Their Majesties, and all the flowers of the town were brought to the Queen.

In the evening, the Ostenburg battalion was selected as Guard of Honour, and placed in the train which was to convey them to Budapest. The train started in the early morning and soon reached the big garrison town of Gyor. The reception of the King and Queen was

enthusiastic beyond all description. The officers in command related how the garrison had received orders from the Budapest Government to stop the King's train, but they had refused to do anything of the sort and declared they would only obey His Majesty's orders.

As soon as the Budapest Government heard that the King had safely passed Győr, the garrison of Komárom received strict orders to stop him and reliable officers were sent down from Budapest to take command of the troops. But nothing helped. The soldiers were led out by these officers to meet the King's train, but as soon as the bodyguard of Their Majesties' prepared to attack them the honest Hungarian peasant boys surrendered to the Royal troops with the greatest enthusiasm, and the officers, who came from Pest to organize the rebellion against the King, were obliged to flee, only one of them, Colonel Simenyfalvy, being taken prisoner by the bodyguard. At ten in the evening His Majesty reviewed the garrison of Komárom.

During this military inspection, Rakovszky, the late President of the National Assembly, now nominated Prime Minister by the King, had a telephonic conversation with Count Bethlen, the Prime Minister of the Horthy Government. Rakovszky summoned the Budapest Government to hand over their offices to the King's new Cabinet, and to maintain peace and order in the Capital until His Majesty's arrival. Rakovszky promised that no one should be punished, but should the Budapest Government continue its resistance, the members would be judged by martial law as soon as their resistance had been overcome, which, considering the attitude of the troops, could only be a question of hours. Count Bethlen asked Rakovszky to stop the King's train and not to allow him to enter Komárom, but to await the arrival of Minister Vas, who had been sent to meet the King with a letter from the Governor, Admiral Horthy.

Minister Vas arrived after the occupation of Komárom.

Horthy, in his letter, protested against handing over his legal powers, conferred by the National Assembly, to the King, but assured him at the same time of his loyalty to the throne! Vas was received by Rakovszky and Count Andrassy, who had been authorized to read Horthy's letter, and not to disturb His Majesty, who was resting, unless it contained important news. As this was certainly not the case and as there were no legitimate arguments in the letter to excuse Horthy's reluctance to hand over the Government, the letter was not taken to His Majesty and Minister Vas was not received by him. Vas simply asked for details about the King's plans, how the international difficulties of the Restoration were to be surmounted, in order to inform the Government. He was given the following reply: "Once the Government has been formerly handed over in Pest, the late Ministry will be given full details of the King's plans, but after the indiscretions committed by Horthy on the occasion of His Majesty's first return to Hungary in March, 1921, concerning the communications Horthy received in a private conversation, they were not in a position to give, at the present state of affairs, any details which must be kept secret, through fear of further indiscretions!"

Vas motored back to Budapest, after having assured Rakovszky and Count Andrassy he would do everything in his power to avoid further complications. Vas only left the train in Tata, where he was witness of the enthusiastic reception of His Majesty by the garrison.

At 6 a.m. on the 23rd October, Torbagy was reached, a station west of Budapest, where the tramway starts. Between this station and Kelenfold, the suburb of Budapest, the goal of the King and his troops, the railway lines had been torn up and the train had to stop until the line could be repaired.

During the night the Budapest Government alarmed the town by spreading false reports that the King was march-



ing at the head of alien troops to occupy the capital of Hungary. In the early morning hours big posters announced that the King was about to attack the town with Czech and Red troops!!! With the aid of this false news some adherents of the present régime in Budapest succeeded in enrolling 300 young University attendants to "save the country" against the Czechs and Communists. Rifles were given to them and, as related by ear-witnesses, the Governor Horthy, at 5.30 a.m. on the 23rd October, made a speech to these poor students saying: "Our poor beloved King has been misled by Czech and Communist bands and is marching with them against the capital. Our duty is to free our King from the hands of these impostors and to save our country from the foreign invasion!"

A loyal Captain, whose name can be published at any moment, was by chance witness of this scene and related the facts, as described.

Animated by this and other similar speeches, these 300 poor boys, in plain clothes, armed with rifles they hardly knew how to manage, hurried out east to Kelenfold, destroyed the railway line between Kelenfold and the next block-house, and occupied the highest points east of Kelenfold, along the railway line as far as the little village of Buda-Ors.

The Budapest Regiment was roused and despatched to Kelenfold, but, hoping to arrive at the moment when the King reached Kelenfold and to unite with the King's body-guard, delayed its departure and only appeared on the scene after 12 o'clock.

When the train containing the Ostenburg guards, which preceded His Majesty's, reached the village of Buda-Ors, where the railway was broken, it was attacked by a furious rifle fire from the students. The company got out of the train, formed a fire-line and advanced to the attack. Very soon about a hundred of the students, under the command of Captain Tokos, were captured. There were

a few killed on both sides. The King's train and the rest of the troops remained in the meantime in Torbagy, the next station towards the west. Hearing the rifle fire, the whole of the bodyguard, with a battery of artillery, were sent on foot in the direction of Buda-Ors. A short time after the last section of the bodyguard left Torbagy, detailed information was given to the King about the fighting near Buda-Ors and how the students had been misled by the Government's supporters. This was related by the prisoners themselves. His Majesty forbade his guards to shed further blood. The firing immediately stopped and the students, seeing they were fighting against regular Hungarian troops and not against Czechs and Communists, asked to negotiate. Meanwhile, the Government in Budapest having gained time, exchanged the greater part of the officers of the Budapest garrison and replaced them with reliable anti-monarchical officers. They were ordered to stop the King's bodyguard by arms, but not to harm His Majesty and to allow him to pass, should he be willing to do so. But the King's troops made no further attack as they had been forbidden to fight against their countrymen, and the Emperor, after what had happened, was strongly advised by his entourage not to go alone to Budapest, as they feared for his safety at the hands of the Government. Thus the fatal armistice was agreed to and a line of demarcation was drawn by the Commander-in-Chief of the King's guards—General Hegedus—who, as he himself related in his statements which were published in Parliament in November, 1921, premeditatedly betrayed the King, and drew the demarcation line in a way which was disadvantageous and intended to make possible their capture and disarmament of the loyal troops during the night. It was agreed that the armistice should last till the following morning, when the representatives of the Government in Pest and of the King should meet.

On the 23rd General Hegedus, under pretext of visiting his troops, went in to Budapest and gave an exact report

to the Government of the position of the King's army and received orders how to act. On his return he told His Majesty he had been to Pest to try to induce the Government to surrender, but could not persuade them, and had witnessed the most minute preparations to resist his advance. Hegedus persuaded the King to do whatever he was asked and assured His Majesty of his loyalty once again, but begged him to dismiss him from the command, as his sons were on the side of the Government.

His Majesty accepted his resignation and told him that it was a strange sign of loyalty if he could not bring over his sons, besides, as there was no longer any fighting, he need not remain with the Army. In spite of his dismissal, Hegedus figured as Commander at the moment when the line of demarcation was drawn.

At 7.30 on the morning of the 24th a paper was brought from the Commander of the Government's troops, General Than, saying that the armistice had already ended at 5 a.m. The document ran :—

“Group of Baron Charles Than. 3379/4. kt.

“To Major Jules Ostenburg.

“Budapest, X.24.3 o'cl.

“The armistice lasts until 5 a.m. of the 24th only. In order to negotiate, the Minister Kania and General Eugen Sarkany will be sent to the block-house at Torokbalint. The firing is in consequence to be stopped from 7.30 a.m. till 8 a.m.

“GENERAL THAN.”

His Majesty sent Minister Gratz and General Lehar to negotiate. They only returned at 10 a.m. In the meantime, all the peasants and inhabitants of Torbagy and the surrounding villages foregathered and a great demonstration was held to welcome the King. The national tricolour was hoisted on all the houses and carried in the procession; speeches were made and the joy and enthusiasm of these true-hearted Hungarians was indescribable.

The demonstration was hardly over when Gratz and Lehar returned. The protocol of the negotiations ran as follows :—

“ Protocol, drawn in the East of Torokbalint, situated at farm called Csiki-major, October 24th, 1921. Present were Dr. Gustav Gratz and General Baron Lehar, by order of His Majesty, and Koloman Kania and General Eugen Sarkany, by order of the Hungarian Government.

“ Minister Kania declared he had orders from his Government to negotiate the conditions of the armistice demanded by the King's troops, under the command of Baron Lehar, on October 23rd, and to settle the conditions with the representatives of King Karl, under which the Hungarian Government would agree to an armistice.

“ Minister Gratz interposed declaring that the suggestion for an armistice and for the meeting was made by Colonel Svoy, one of the Commanders of the Government troops, and that the initiative did not come from the Emperor. But, he went on, as His Majesty desired to avoid bloodshed, he had said nothing against the proposed exchange of views. Gratz further declared that yesterday's bloodshed was caused by the attitude of the Government's troops, who fired against a train containing His Majesty's troops which was entering Kelenfold on the free line, and who had not been warned they would be fired on. Under these circumstances His Majesty's Army declined all responsibility for the bloodshed.

“ General Sarkany remarked that the hostile attitude of the Government's troops was necessary in order to stop the King's Army from entering the Capital.

“ Gustav Gratz declared that had notice been given in time, this aim could have been achieved without bloodshedding. Minister Koloman Kania then announced the only conditions under which the Hungarian Government would agree to an armistice which were as follows :—

“(1) Laying down of arms and handing over of all war material.



- “(2) Amnesty to everyone who laid down arms at once, except to the leaders and instigators; the leaders and political advisers of the King to be tried by the Hungarian Civil Courts.
- “(3) His Majesty to abdicate the throne in a written declaration.
- “(4) The Hungarian Government to guarantee the personal security of Their Majesties as long as they remained on Hungarian territory.
- “(5) The Hungarian Government to designate a residence for Their Majesties on Hungarian territory, after negotiations with the representatives of the Great Powers in Budapest.
- “(6) Concerning their future domicile abroad, the Hungarian Government would come to an agreement with the Great Powers.

“Gustav Gratz declared that he would communicate the conditions to His Majesty, the King of Hungary, without delay, so that the Emperor and his responsible Councillors could decide whether the conditions should be accepted as the basis of negotiations, or not. He requested them to name a place where a reply could be sent, and proposed that in order to avoid any bloodshedding, hostilities should be suspended as long as the negotiations lasted.

“General Sarkany declared that as soon as the present protocol was signed hostilities should be resumed at once.

“Gratz declared that as the proposal for the suspension of hostilities had been rejected, he declined, in the King's name, all responsibility for any further bloodshedding.

“Koloman Kania called the attention of His Majesty's representatives to the great peril which threatened Hungary and the Hungarian Government declined all responsibility for anything that might follow.

“Read aloud and signed :

“KANIA KALMAN, M.P.

“SARKANY JENO, M.P.

“GRATZ GUSTAV, M.P.

“LEHAR, M.P.”

During the negotiations the Government troops, which during the night had received big reinforcements, began to march into the rear of the King's Guard who, conforming to the armistice, were camping in their previous position. As soon as the Commanders noticed this unfair movement, they endeavoured to make a last but hopeless defence. Seven minutes after Gratz and Lehar came back from the negotiations, a rifle ball hit the railway carriage next to the one in which the King and Queen were sitting. The lives of their Majesties were in imminent peril when the Government's troops began to fire on the train. The position being hopeless, a high officer was left behind to rally those of the Guard who had not been captured, and the train containing their Majesties and their suites moved westwards to regain Western Hungary, where it was believed they would be safe for the time being.

But the train could go no further than Tata as the lines had been torn up. The King and Queen therefore accepted the hospitality of the owner of the beautiful castle in Tata, Count Esterhazy, who together with the greater part of the Hungarian aristocracy and the mass of the nation remained faithful to their King, even in his powerless condition.

On October 24th, at Tata, the King and the Queen for the first time since October the 19th had a comfortable bed in which to pass the night and sat down to a clean table for dinner. The loyalists decided to wait in Tata until the Government formally arrested the King and Queen and their entourage. His Majesty ordered his two principal officers, Colonels Lehar and Ostenburg to make their escape, as he feared the Government would threaten to kill them if he refused to sign the abdication. So they both left on strict orders from the King and not, as it was said by their enemies, through fear of the Government. Colonel Ostenburg was arrested two days later, as he refused to go further than one hour's ride from His Majesty's side at Tata, but Colonel Lehar was never arrested and as Ostenburg acted under Lehar's orders, he could not be condemned.



THE EMPEROR KARL.





## SECOND ATTEMPT TO REGAIN THRONE 273

As soon as the King and Queen had left the train in the station of Tata, General Hegedus, who had accompanied their Majesties so far, bade them the most loyal farewell, then telephoned to Pest and put himself at the disposal of the Government and asked for orders. He reappeared within a short time at the Castle to say that Colonel Simenyfalvy and himself were to look after the King and Queen's "security" with a section of soldiers sent from Budapest. He was also charged to ask a reply to the Government's conditions dictated in the morning, and to serve as witness of His Majesty's act of abdication. Hegedus was not admitted into the presence of the King.

During the night, an attempt was made to kill the Emperor which thanks to the watchfulness of his host, Count Esterhazy, and the loyalty of Colonel Simenyfalvy—though he was acting under the orders of the Government—did not succeed. The would-be murderers belonged to the army and two of them were officers. They had been sent from Pest in a motor-car through Veszprem and Gyor and followed the King to Tata. In the towns where their car stopped the people related afterwards that they thought the officers were hurrying to reach the King in order to help him and so they were not interfered with. But in one town they declared they would help the Government out of its awkward predicament and give the "King's question" a "radical solution." With the aid of Colonel Simenyfalvy's soldiers the assailants were disarmed at only a few yards distance from His Majesty's bedroom, but on the following day their arms were, on the Government's orders, restored to them, they were set free and disappeared as they came in a motor car. Nobody in the King's entourage ever knew the names of those individuals and the Government never investigated this sinister affair.

On the following day, October 25th, the Government ordered the arrest of the King's followers. They were Rakovszky, Count Andrassy, Gustav Gratz and Boroviczeny, who figured as the political councillors of the

King. His Majesty protested against this measure and demanded on constitutional grounds to be arrested too, if the Government wanted to separate him from his political advisers. He summoned Colonel Simenyfalvy before him and formally ordered this officer, who had given the oath of fidelity to him and who even wore His Majesty's decoration—the "Leopold-Order"—(a high distinction) to take away his sword. Colonel Simenyfalvy refused. After some discussion the Government decided that the politicians could remain with the King as long as he stayed in Tata.

Shortly afterwards the Government announced to the King the news—which was not true—that the Czechs had mobilized and attacked Komarom, so it was not safe for him to remain in Tata any longer, and requested His Majesty to go to Tihany, a beautifully situated monastery on a peninsula of the Lake of Balaton. The Emperor consented only under the condition that he should be accompanied by his political advisers.

On October 27th at 6 a.m. the King, accompanied by four gentlemen—Rakovszky, Andrassy, Gratz, and Boroviczeny and the Queen accompanied by Mrs. Boroviczeny, then Countess Schönbrun, and Countess Esterhazy were transported to Tihany.

At all the stations where the special train stopped, the population, who had somehow got to know of the journey, gathered and gave the most warm and touching ovation to the King and Queen. In some places, where the inhabitants of the villages learnt from the bigger land-owners the probable time of the passing of Their Majesties' train, they came out on the line with national flags and made the most touching demonstrations. The Hungarian Government could act as it chose towards the King, but it could not hinder this spontaneous demonstration of the Hungarian people's love of and adherence to Their Majesties. That the attitude of the Government was in no way the expression of the feeling of the nation was shown during that sad journey.

The old monastery in Tihany looked like a barrack. It was full of soldiers, all exits and entrances to the peninsula being strictly guarded. No living soul could have come near without being noticed and stopped at once. Their Majesties were led to a modestly-furnished room which communicated with two monk's cells, meant to serve as bedrooms. No mistake, it was a prison! The Hungarian King a prisoner in Hungary!

Next morning Count and Countess Esterhazy were forced to leave Tihany, and Andrassy, Gratz, Rakovszky and Boroviczeny were declared prisoners and forbidden to leave their cells, where they were guarded by detectives. In front of the door of their Majesties' room a sentinel was placed who had strict orders to fire at anybody who dared to enter without the permission of the military commander, Colonel Simenyfalvy, who, as in Tata, remained in charge of the forces guarding the royal prisoners.

Realizing what these measures meant, the King called for Colonel Simenyfalvy and told him that having been made a prisoner, it was unfitting for him to wear his sword and he handed it to Simenyfalvy who declined to accept it and protested against the idea that Their Majesties were prisoners, declaring that the Government was only guarding "their personal security." This, he added, was also the reason why they were not allowed to walk, except in a little garden near the monastery, surrounded by a high fence, and then only in the company of a detective. His Majesty protested against this unheard of hypocrisy, and as he knew that Andrassy and Rakovszky had been secretly sent to Pest as prisoners, he threw his sword on the floor at the Colonel's feet where it remained—as the latter absolutely refused to take it—until the end of His Majesty's imprisonment in Tihany.

Three officers arrived during the night, representatives of the Entente—a British, a French, and an Italian Colonel. Simenyfalvy declared the Entente had come to look after Their Majesties' personal security and to super-

intend the arrest and imprisonment of the King's political councillors. The British officer, Colonel Selby, told Mrs. Boroviczeny later that it was not true, that they came as jailors. He wanted to see her husband—whom he had known before—but was forbidden to do so by Hungarian officers.

On October 28th, the Primate of Hungary came to render homage to the Emperor and Empress. The Primate assured the Emperor of his fidelity and tendered the homage of all the Bishops and Clergy, expressing the deep sorrow of the Church at the turn events had taken. The Primate stated he had refused all official or semi-official missions from the Government, but had seen both the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister before he came. Both pretended to be legitimists and declared they wished His Majesty to resign in his own interests. The Primate was against the abdication, as were the majority of the political leaders. The visit of the venerable old priest was a great joy to Their Majesties, as they realized they had not lost the support of the loyal Hungarians, which they had been led to suppose from the tactless attitude of the Government.

It is a question for history to decide whether the attitude of the Hungarian Government in October, 1921, was patriotic or opposed to the interests of the country—as the King's partisans maintain—but their methods were in any case tactless and have cast shame on the Hungarian nation. All that was done could have been carried out in a more tactful manner and would not have brought the odium on the Government of having betrayed the King.

The Prime Minister, Count Bethlen, requested an audience of the King in his prison in Tihany, which of course was refused by His Majesty.

After Andrassy and Rakovszky were sent to prison in Pest and Boroviczeny was forbidden to see His Majesty, the King strictly refused to receive any representative of the Government. The only means of communication,



therefore, was through Dr. Gratz. Through him they tried several times to induce the King to abdicate from the throne, but of course he refused and declared he would never yield. To dethrone the King would be a revolutionary act without legal validity, especially under foreign pressure, but an abdication would be a legal act and would entail the legal surrender of his imperial rights. So His Majesty, in expectation of being dethroned, gave Dr. Gratz the following protest to communicate to the Government:

“As long as God gives me the strength to fulfil my duty, I cannot abdicate from the Hungarian Throne, to which I am bound by my Coronation oath, and I maintain all the rights which have descended to me with the Hungarian Crown. I will always uphold all the obligations towards the Hungarian Nation, which I swore to at my Coronation. It is my firm conviction that this is the only standpoint which can preserve the great traditions of the Hungarian Nation and safeguard its permanent interests, which are independent of passing episodes.

“Tihany. 29-30. October, 1921.

“KARL.”

On October 30th, the King was informed through Dr. Gratz, that the Hungarian Government had decided to yield to the request of the Entente and to deliver the King into the hands of the Commander of the British Danube Flotilla. His Majesty sent the following protest:

“I protest against the action of the Hungarian Government which delivers me, conforming to the decision of the Council of the Ambassadors, into the hands of the Commander of the British Danube Flotilla. Conforming to the Hungarian laws, as a Hungarian I have the indisputable right to stay on Hungarian territory.

“KARL.”

Before the departure, Count Albert Apponyi and Count Szechen arrived at Tihany and asked for audiences of the King. The Government did not dare to forbid this interview with the venerable leader of the opposition. The

King greatly appreciated the courageous conduct of these gentlemen and received them with pleasure. Count Apponyi was naturally of the opinion that any act of dethronement would be an illegal one and could have no lawful consequence. He promised to protest against it in Parliament and to obtain the support of all who were of his opinion. He assured the King that the heart of every true Hungarian would be with him in his exile and that all were ashamed of the way he had been treated. The views of Count Szechen were the same.

The two politicians had hardly left, when Colonel Simenyfalvy came to request the King and Queen to depart to Baja, in order to board the British monitor. The train, he said, was waiting. His Majesty declared he would only depart under "force majeure" and asked for a written order from the Government and a signed declaration from Colonel Simenyfalvy, that he would fulfil the orders by force. This document was given and ran as follows:

"My most noble Lord and Master! I beg to submit the enclosed signed order of the hero Baron Paul Nagy, General in Command, Number 32 hdm. from October 30, 1921. I have been ordered in case of necessity to send away Your Majesties by force. I remain, Your Majesties' most obedient servant, COLONEL SIMENYFALVY." Tihany, October 31, 1921.

Enclosed were the detailed orders of the Government regulating the departure of Their Majesties. Having read these documents, the King, yielding to force, agreed to board the train. He noticed that Colonel Simenyfalvy was in tears, shook hands with him, and then went downstairs to the waiting motor car.

The soldiers, who were to accompany the King and Queen to the point of departure abroad and to act as their guard, were sent to the train before the King and his entourage. Those soldiers who were left behind in Tihany to keep up appearances, had their eyes bound—as several of them related later to the writer of these lines—so

that they did not know that their Commanders were taking away their King and Queen to foreign captivity. As those honest Hungarian soldiers said, the Commanders were afraid that the soldiers, seeing the shameful act, would turn their arms against their officers and free the captive King and Queen. Hungarians have had enough of revolutions and of upstarts who obey the orders of Prague and Belgrade to the ruin of Hungary!

In the train, Colonel Simenyfalvy announced to the King that at 6 a.m. they would arrive at a place near Baja, where his extradition was to take place. There the Hungarian guards were to hand over the King and Queen to the French Colonel, Hineux, who would in turn deliver them over in Baja to the Commander of the British Flotilla.

Next morning at 6 o'clock, the King and Queen boarded the British monitor, the "Glowworm," which was to convey them down the Danube to the ocean, thence to be sent to an unknown destination.

Before the ship sailed, the Nuncio, Mons. Schioppa, came to see Their Majesties by order of the Pope and brought them the Papal-Blessing.

The Commander of the "Glowworm," Captain Snagge, asked His Majesty to give him his word of honour not to escape, in which case he would be in a position to treat them as guests, otherwise, he would be obliged, to his great regret, to regard them as prisoners. His Majesty gave him the following document:—

"Je donne ma parole d'honneur au Capitaine Arthur Snagge, que pendant mon voyage tant que je serai sous sa garde, je m'abstiendrai de toute tentative de regagner ma liberté. En faisant cette promesse au Capitaine Arthur Snagge, je me considere comme engagé vis-à-vis de lui personnellement, et pour toute la durée de ce voyage.

"Glowworm, 1, Novembre, 1921.

"KARL."

After having received this document, the British Commander treated Their Majesties with the utmost courtesy

and with due regard to their rank. He told them at table how touched he was that in spite of the promise of the highest wages, he could not secure a Hungarian pilot, as the population had learnt the aim of the voyage. At last he was obliged to engage a Serb. Crossing the Serbian territory, Captain Snagge saw some officers and from what they told him, he believed Serbia could hardly have conducted a successful campaign against Hungary, had the Restoration succeeded.

The "Glowworm" could only go as far as Moldavia, as the water was too shallow. Motor cars took the King and Queen, who were accompanied by Count Esterhazy and Mrs. Boroviczeny, to Orsova, the last frontier town of old Hungary. From Orsova a special train took them to Galaz, and from there a yacht to Sulina, where the British cruiser H.M.S. "Cardiff" was ready to take them on board.

During the journey across Rumanian territory, Their Majesties were guarded by British Marines in the cars and in the special train. The Captain of H.M.S. "Cardiff" received orders to sail for Madeira. This remote island in the Atlantic was chosen by the Entente as its geographical situation would prevent any further attempts to re-establish the Danube Monarchy, a source of terror to those who pretend to have liberated the Austro-Hungarians from the "Hapsbourg joug." But how heavy this "joug" must have been is shown by the immense personal attraction of the late Sovereign, who had to be removed to a remote island in the Atlantic, as his presence in Europe threatened to upset the Peace Treaties and frightened the new Hungarian Revolutionary Government so much that it delivered up its own King to a Foreign Power!

On the "Cardiff" the Emperor Karl was treated with the usual British courtesy and in perfect accordance with his rank, but the Royal party had a very rough passage. It was late in the autumn and many of the officers, accustomed as they were to the rough seas, suffered from seasickness.



On leaving Sulina nobody on board knew the destination of the vessel, and the Commander of the "Cardiff" only received orders at Gibraltar to proceed to Madeira.

In spite of the late autumn, the little town of Funchal greeted the exiled Emperor and Empress with the flowers of spring. It was a rainy day, but thousands of people awaited the British ship, bringing this young couple of unhappy monarchs to their place of exile who, amongst all the world's rulers, were the least responsible for the great tragedy which resulted in war. Everybody seemed to feel for them in their sad plight and they were received in Funchal with so much warmth and sympathy that they likened it to the receptions by their own people in former happy days.

Rooms in the best hotel in Funchal—the Villa Victoria—were reserved by the local authorities for the use of the Imperial couple with their very small suite which consisted, by the Entente's orders, of only two persons, Count and Countess Hunyady, the "Grand Marechal de la Cour," and the lady-in-waiting.

As the revolutionary governments of the so-called succession States of the late Monarchy had confiscated all the Hapsburg properties, the Emperor Karl had no fortune left and he landed in Madeira with only about 14,000 Swiss francs, which money he had with him when he left by aeroplane for Hungary. It is therefore needless to state that his stay in an expensive hotel could not be prolonged. A Portuguese gentleman offered to lend His Majesty his villa near Funchal, a summer residence on the mountains. The villa was empty and at the immediate disposal of the Emperor. Thus, not being able to afford the hotel prices down in sunny Funchal, the Emperor decided to go and live in the villa on the mountains which were at this season of the year continually enveloped in a foggy mist. The damp climate affected his health and when the tragic end of his young life came three months later, the generous Portuguese gentleman was in despair about his share in the

responsibility, as he had only intended his house to be used in the summer. He did not know into what state of poverty this once so powerful monarch had fallen, and never imagined he would go up to the foggy mountains in the middle of winter.

The rooms in the villa were damp and the sun never shone during the month that followed the Emperor's arrival. It seemed as if the climate wished to show him the allegory of his life.

On the 14th March, 1922, the Emperor Karl fell ill with a slight cold and fever. Though he was not inclined to take much notice of this indisposition, he retired to bed on the earnest entreaties of Her Majesty, who feared a return of the Spanish "Grippe" which had already attacked her husband twice. On the following day the fever was rather higher and a doctor was asked to come up from Funchal. As the fever did not abate and complications threatened, the conscientious doctor brought with him a second one for a consultation. These two Portuguese doctors did their best from the very beginning, showed the most wonderful care and self-sacrifice and employed every possible remedy of science, but, alas, in vain.

On the 24th March, the Emperor was transferred to one of the brightest rooms in the gloomy house and everybody prayed for one or two sunny days, but the clouds would not roll away and the weather remained as grey and sad as the spirits of all those who surrounded the sick Emperor. On the 26th, the fever rose still higher and an injection was administered to strengthen the action of his heart. But nothing seemed to help and on the next day, March 27th, an infection of both lungs appeared. But as yet there was no immediate danger. Nevertheless, the Emperor asked for Extreme Unction, which was given to him in the presence of the Empress and the Crown Prince, Otto, a boy of nine years, who in spite of his youth understood quite well the meaning of the Sacrament, and prayed that with God's help he might have strength to submit to

His Will, however hard it might be. The reception of the Sacrament relieved the Emperor, and he remained alone with his first-born son for a long time, but no one knows what passed at the interview.

During the first days of the Emperor's illness, the Empress nursed her husband all alone. Unhappily he was not the only patient in the house. Several of the Royal children and some of the very few servants had been attacked by this nasty Spanish "Grippe," but happily in a much slighter degree than the Emperor.

On the morning of the 28th the Emperor felt much better. Everybody was full of fresh hope and it seemed as if the sun were about to shine for him again, however cloudy the sky remained. But the improvement in his condition did not last long. In the evening the fever increased and for the first time he became delirious. Even in his delirium his only thoughts were for the welfare of his country and he spoke in the different languages of his people about the institutions and reforms necessary. He used Hungarian most of the time and spoke of Hungary as his cherished home, forgiving those who had betrayed him to his enemies.

On the 29th a dangerous weakness of the heart appeared. The Emperor received an injection and once more the crisis passed. He had a calm night. The next day was a hard struggle for life; exhausted by the long and high fever, His Majesty was unconscious the greater part of the day, and in his lucid moments very weak. But in spite of his exhaustion he never ceased to remain the most considerate and charming gentleman, who thought of everybody first, and never of himself. He requested his attendants to bring a comfortable chair for his grandmother, the Archduchess Maria Theresa, inquired every moment about the health of Her Majesty and the children, begged the Empress not to overtire herself, and had a friendly word for the nurse and the physicians.

On March the 31st the infection of the lungs took a

dangerous turn, although the extremities remained free and there was still some hope, and it almost seemed as if the strong constitution of the young Emperor would get the better of the illness. Towards evening, the temperature fell lower than it had done since the second day of the illness, but this was only a temporary amelioration. On the morning of April 1st, the physicians declared that there were only a few hours left. The Emperor was fully conscious and asked again for Extreme Unction. He took the Sacrament with the exemplary calm of a devout man whose conscience tells him that he need not be afraid of the eternal Judge, having lived according to the highest commandments of his religion, which teaches altruism before everything else. He had done his duty to the very best of his ability and his first care had always been for those placed under his rule. At the Emperor's request, the Host remained in his room for the last hours of his life and his strong religious belief already united him here on earth with the Lord whom he was not afraid to meet in eternity.

The Emperor inquired after his children, then complained of feeling very tired. He could not lie down and his breath failed. The temperature rose very quickly and the doctors gave constant inhalations of oxygen in order to ease the agony. But a cruel fatality pursued the dying Monarch even to the end. The oxygen had to be brought from Funchal and before the end came they ran short of it, so that during his last few hours even his pain could not be eased as the doctors wished.

Very shortly before his death the Emperor called for the Crown Prince. Young Otto was led in and knelt the whole time near his mother, praying with her for the best of fathers and the most tender of husbands. It seemed impossible that God should not listen to such ardent prayers. Everybody hoped against hope, but death came and put an end to the happiest of family lives. The poor Emperor—life brought him sufferings and sorrows, but at



least in one thing he found rich compensation—in his family. The last words of the dying Emperor were: “I must suffer so much, in order that my people can unite again. I forgive everybody. Thy Will be done.”

As the poor Emperor had much difficulty in breathing when lying down, the Empress took him in her arms and supported him till death liberated him from all earthly pain, at 12.33 a.m. on the 2nd of April.

The dead Emperor was dressed in his uniform and on the 5th April was laid in the coffin. The whole island came to visit the body, the Emperor having been very popular in Madeira. The funeral took place in the afternoon of the same day. The Bishop of Funchal buried the Imperial prisoner's earthly remains in his blossoming prison, in Madeira, under the altar of the Church of the Holy Virgin on the Monte. Some ten to twenty thousand people accompanied the coffin to its last resting-place. The funeral looked like that of an Emperor in his own country, and his own subjects could not have shown more attachment to him than did the good islanders of Madeira.

The Emperor's coffin was carried by the few of his own subjects who were permitted to remain with him in his exile. In spite of the small number, all the nationalities of the old Danubian Monarchy were represented.

Count Josef Karolyi, the step-brother of the revolutionary Michael Karolyi, who ruined his country, carried the Toison D'Or behind the coffin. It was an expiation for the great shame brought on the escutcheon and traditions of a great family. The authorities of the Island took an official part in the funeral. All the shops in Funchal were closed and the little Island really tried to do all that honour to the Royal Martyr which was due to him from his own ungrateful people.

Thus there passed to his eternal rest in this lonely Atlantic island the last of a dynasty which had reigned in Europe for seven hundred years.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### THE HUNGARY OF TO-DAY

It has been my endeavour throughout this book to give a picture of events in Hungary during the past three years, especially of life under the Soviet régime and during the Rumanian occupation. Unhappy Hungary suffered severely enough under these two visitations, but it was reserved for the Entente statesmen to put the final straw on the camel's back and utterly to destroy the economic homogeneity of the land by forcing the Hungarians to sign conditions of peace which for severity are almost without a parallel in the history of Europe. Compared with the Treaty of the Trianon (i.e. with Hungary) the Treaty of Versailles (i.e. with Germany) is a mild and humane document. Germany, the arch instigator of the War who dragged her weaker allies behind her Juggernaut car of militarism, has not lost fifty per cent. of what Hungary has been made to sign away. Yet how many even now realize the monstrous character and injustice of the Treaty of the Trianon, or at the time of the signing of that Treaty, took the smallest interest in what happened in Central Europe once the arch-enemy, Germany, had been disposed of by the Treaty of Versailles.

But now there are a few who are gradually awakening to the true facts, and it is as well they should do so, for as long as the Treaty of the Trianon is allowed to remain in its present form, there can be little hope of permanent peace in Europe. Unfortunately lack of space prevents me from publishing in detail a summary of all the territorial, industrial and agricultural wealth which Hungary has lost

under the Treaty of the Trianon. Several excellent pamphlets have however been published on this subject in English and French. No one has ever attempted to dispute the truth of the figures collected with great care and accuracy contained in these excellent works. The enemies of Hungary are obliged to remain silent in the face of figures which cannot be denied and which speak for themselves.

At a rough estimate one may say Hungary has lost two-thirds of her former territory, two-thirds of her live stock and seven-eighths of her industries and at least two-thirds of her national wealth.

A careful perusal of the present territorial, financial, and economic position of Hungary proves I think conclusively that no settlement based on so much injustice and on such a fundamental departure from all the recognised economic laws which govern the intricate financial equilibrium of a modern state can be considered as final. Just as long as the Treaty of the Trianon is allowed to stand "in toto," there can be no hope of lasting peace in Central Europe. Hungary will remain the storm centre of the New Balkans and although, at the present moment, she is far too weak to strike a blow on her own behalf, surrounded as she is by the hostile states of the Little Entente, who can say what new grouping of nations in Europe may not bring about the shifting of the balance of power in her favour in the near future? One thing is certain, when a favourable opportunity arises the Hungarians will not hesitate to strike. Who can blame them if they do?

The triumph of the Turks and the annulment of the Treaty of Sèvres have vibrated a wave of unrest and of hope throughout the Central Powers. It is significant of the times that the citizens of Budapest have subscribed to present Kemal Pasha with a Sword of Honour. Both the Germans and the Hungarians now argue with logic that whereas peaceful remonstrance has failed in obtaining any

mitigation of their burdens, armed force has succeeded beyond the utmost expectations of the Turks. The reappearance of the Turks in Eastern Thrace has already shifted the weight of men and material which the Little Entente—more especially Yugo-Slavia and Rumania—could employ against the Hungarians, and if both Rumania and Yugo-Slavia found themselves engaged in hostilities with Turkey, the Hungarians would be left to deal with their arch enemy, the Czechs, single-handed.

The stupendous blunders made by the Entente in Paris in 1919 and 1920 in regard to Central Europe are only now being realized to the full. The harvest of racial hatred, political discontent, and economic ruin sown during those momentous years is now ripening. These errors and miscalculations of the Entente statesmen divide themselves naturally under two heads (a) Racial, (b) Economic. I will deal first with the racial. When the old Austro-Hungarian Empire was in process of disruption after the signing of the Armistice in October, 1918, no effort was made to think out a collective future for these various races which had dwelt under a common flag, common laws, and a common economic system for so many years. Each was allowed to go its own way, achieve its own ambitions and prepare its own economic future, quite regardless of the injury which might be inflicted on other members of the family. Finally, as a climax, only those races within the old Empire which had deserted the sinking ship in the mid-ocean of war were given a hearing before the Supreme Council, whereas those who stuck to the ship to the end were not even allowed to speak on their own behalf. Their case, when presented, was only heard through the mouths of their bitterest enemies. The influence of Masaryk and Benes reigned supreme in Paris and these two eminent statesmen, sponsored by the French, were able to obtain enormous stretches of territory from Hungary and to found a Republic which contains no less than seven different races, thus reproducing all the worst



anomalies of the old Austro-Hungarian Empire, which it was repeatedly declared was too heterogeneous to survive the Wilsonian tests of "Self Determination" and "Nationalism."

Embraced within the boundaries of the new Czecho-Slovakian Republic is the greater part of the industrial wealth of the old Empire, including an enormous proportion of the iron and coal. These mighty concessions to the Czechs are considered by some to be only a fair and adequate reward for the assistance they rendered to the Entente in the latter stage of the War, when the Czech Legion fought on our side in Siberia. Others, who regard the matter from the material, rather than the sentimental, standpoint, consider that Czecho-Slovakia has been overburdened with prosperity at the expense of her neighbours, who have been reduced to the verge of ruin. Neither should it be forgotten that Czech troops were fighting against the Entente up to the end of the War. Whatever the balance of right or wrong may be, it is a dangerous policy to keep millions of men and women in political unrest and economic misery to satisfy the exorbitant claims of one's allies. Austria and Hungary have in fact been despoiled and ruined to placate the Rumanians, the Czechs, and the Yugo-Slavs.

It is hardly conceivable that the Big Four and their expert advisers would ever have consented to this arbitrary and artificial division of the territories of the old Empire, had anyone foreseen in 1919, the unprecedented economic cataclysm which would follow in its train. Surely steps would have been taken to bring about some kind of an economic union amongst the old and the new States, even if a political separation was inevitable. The reader must not imagine that commerce, industry and economic homogeneity have been sacrificed in the interests of racial separation based on the principle of "self determination." Far from it. There are more people living under flags they refuse to call their own to-day than there were in the

reign of Franz Joseph. The chaos which has arisen from the Balkanizing of Central Europe is unparalleled and the confusion is such that no one has any solution to offer which would satisfy all parties.

In considering the economic chaos, it is necessary to bear in mind the fact that the old Austro-Hungarian Empire had a very small export trade and in latter years could never balance her budget. What would be called an import trade with other nations was in reality an export trade on a large scale between the different States of the Empire strictly governed by a Customs Union. That is to say, a trade between Austria and Hungary, or Austria and Bohemia, or Hungary with Bohemia, or with Bosnia and Galicia. Vienna was the banking and clearing-house of all these States, also the distributing centre, owing to the strategical position of the railways passing through the Capital. Thus each State within the Empire could obtain the raw material or manufactured articles which it did not produce itself from one of its neighbours, in exchange for something which those neighbours lacked, and on the whole this system worked very well. Trade, in fact, automatically drifted into its natural channels and the financing was carried through by the Vienna banks.

The break-up of the old Empire has completely destroyed the internal economy of fifty millions of people, by dividing them into six separate independent States, connected by no Customs Union, each with its own currency of constantly varying value. These States which have arisen from the old Empire are the following: (1) Poland, which has been given the greater part of Galicia; (2) Czechoslovakia, which has absorbed Slovakia and German Bohemia; (3) Austria, which is left with the Western Comitas of Hungaria, Styria, and the Northern Tyrol; (4) Hungary, completely dismembered, is now a small State of less than one-third of her former size, with about eight millions of inhabitants. Transylvania and Bukovina have gone to Rumania, and Yugo-Slavia has taken

Croatia, Bosnia and Slavonia. All these expatriated territories were united by a common Customs Union up to 1918. Up to 1919, these States (always excluding the pre-war territories of Rumania and Yugo-Slavia) enjoyed a common currency issued by the old Austro-Hungarian Bank. At the present time each of them has a separate currency varying in value to an extent hitherto undreamed of as possible, even by the most eminent and far-seeing financiers, and which renders trade between them impossible. When the creation of the new States began in 1919, the question as to what proportion of the old national debt of the Empire and the payment of reparations each of them would be held liable for, caused great anxiety and heart burnings and each was anxious to escape from this liability. (It has subsequently turned out that owing to the immense fall in the currency and in all government stocks, the old debt has almost automatically wiped itself out, but this was not foreseen in 1919). Therefore it became the primary object of each State to unload as many paper crowns of the former issue of the Austro-Hungarian Bank as possible on its neighbours, in case they had to be redeemed in gold at a later date. Millions of crowns were constantly being smuggled across the frontiers. Stamping was therefore adopted to stop this dumping. Each government announced that within a certain date, all unstamped crowns found within its borders would no longer be accepted as legal currency. At first the differences in value in the stamped crowns were small, but they gradually increased, as the prosperity of one member of the old family grew at the expense of its neighbour. In the end each government decided to withdraw the old notes from circulation and to issue a new currency of its own. Specified dates were fixed by which all the old notes had to be handed in. The differences in value then became more and more painfully evident. Austria gradually dropped behind in the race and she was followed closely by Poland; Hungary came next, then

Yugo-Slavia, with the Czechs easy winners. Since 1919, the Czech currency has risen by enormous leaps and bounds, until to-day it stands fourth amongst European currencies, after the Italian lira.

Roughly, the position to-day in relation to sterling, although constantly fluctuating, is as follows: Czech Crowns about 140 to the pound, Hungarian about 11,000 and the Austrian (already quite valueless) at 350,000 to the pound. These figures mean that the Czech Crown is 2,500 times the value of the Austrian Crown and 70 times the value of the Hungarian, while the Hungarian crown is about 30 times the value of the Austrian. Yet all these States lived under a common flag and had the same currency three years ago! The figures speak for themselves. They are in fact the index by which you can judge the relative value of the portions of the old Empire in agricultural land and industries given, or left, respectively to Hungary, Austria, and Czecho-Slovakia. The manifest folly, injustice and lack of stability of the settlement arrived at in Paris becomes obvious at once.

Czecho-Slovakia is, in fact, the only State in Europe which has really gained anything out of the War. She has up to the present enjoyed a prosperity quite unknown to other countries. Her "valuta" stands so high because she is almost self-supporting, having a fine agriculture and possessing three-quarters of the active industries and raw material of the old Empire, within her borders. Yet Czecho-Slovakia to-day is faced with a financial crisis, her future is not assured, and she occupies the same position vis-à-vis to her neighbours, as we do vis-à-vis to Germany. She cannot export her manufactured goods and raw materials because her neighbours, with whom she formerly traded, are too poor to buy from her. Such is the irony of fate. Czecho-Slovakia possesses almost everything her neighbours require in order to restart their industries and to supply their people with the necessities of life, and yet the invisible lines of demarcation drawn in Paris in 1919,



called frontiers, absolutely stop the natural flow of commodities, either raw materials, manufactured goods or food supplies from reaching the starving nations which surround her on all sides. The result is disastrous to this "enfant gâté" of the Entente, for the manufacturers must now sell their goods at a loss or keep them on their hands, and Czecho-Slovakia has become the most expensive country in Europe in which to live and the one in which you get least value for your money. Thus the Czechs have troubles like their neighbours; they are, in fact, too rich for the neighbourhood in which they live. Czecho-Slovakia is a gilded palace amidst a sea of poverty, which nothing can enter and nothing can leave. If the prosperity of the Czechs is to be consolidated in the future, they must either build up an export trade with countries with a currency on a par with their own, or else take drastic measures to revive their trade with their immediate neighbours with whom they formerly dealt. The first of these solutions is almost impossible of realization, owing to the geographical position of Czecho-Slovakia and therefore only the second remains.

The Austrian crown stands at 350,000 to the pound because the Big Four left Austria with a capital—Vienna—of two million five hundred thousand inhabitants, a hinterland containing four million five hundred thousand, without any industries or raw materials, and with insufficient agriculture even to supply the wants of this small population. Austria has practically no export trade, owing to lack of raw materials, and must buy almost every necessity of life in foreign valuta. All that remains to her is a splendid capital with an enormous number of magnificent banks, yet hardly big enough to hold the ever-increasing note issue, and a splendid collection of railway stations and strategical lines converging from all parts of Europe, with but few trains running over them and with grass—very welcome to her few remaining cattle—growing between the lines.

One thing is certain. Not all the king's horses and all the king's men—or should we say Foreign Loans—can ever make Austria an economic, self-supporting State again. It is an utter impossibility. Just as soon as European statesmen have succeeded in righting Turkish affairs, they will be called upon to face the Austrian question once more. Austria must either join Germany or be further sub-divided, if she is to save her people from complete ruin. Styria may go to Yugo-Slavia; the Tyrol to Bavaria and the Southern Tyrol to Italy, while as for Vienna, the most likely solution for the moment would seem to be an incorporation into Czecho-Slovakia, or else the retention of the capital as a Free City—whatever that vague term may mean—under the League of Nations.

Hungary, taking her currency as the index, is about thirty times more prosperous than Austria. The rich agricultural lands which remain to her are sufficient to feed her reduced population, and thus she has not starved like Austria. But having lost two-thirds of her territory, nearly all her industries and the greater part of her raw materials, she is merely a fifth-rate Power. But Hungary will not disappear from the map like Austria. Her people can still exist and they will never rest until they have regained some portion of their lost territories and wealth, which have been filched by their neighbours. The Hungarians are a powerful race of great pride and virility. They have played an important rôle in history and are bound to do so again, situated as they are in the heart of Europe. They have their virtues and their faults like all other races and have committed gigantic blunders in the past, but if they are capable of profiting from the school of adversity through which they are now passing, they are bound to regain their supremacy in the future.

It is comparatively easy to point out on broad lines a few of the evils from which Central Europe is suffering at the present time; but it is quite another matter to find a solution for them. The statesmen who framed the

Treaties in Paris were only human and even the most penetrating intelligence could not foresee this appalling chaos, which would terminate five years of universal war. The evils which have arisen are, however, largely due to the fact that the Treaties were drawn up in an atmosphere of hate before the violent passions produced by the War had cooled down and before economic facts could be considered dispassionately and separated from the primitive instincts of revenge. The inevitable result has been that friend and foe alike are now plunged in a common misery. We have given some of our Allies in Central Europe more than they can conveniently digest and we have left our former enemies too little to ensure their existence. Thus they will have no interest in preserving peace in Europe, unless we are prepared to redress their wrongs.

The ethnological and economic problems of Central Europe are inextricably bound together. That is to say, racial hatred, the desire for revenge and the readjustment of frontiers would largely disappear if some hope of future rehabilitation and prosperity could be held out to millions who are now faced with ruin and semi-starvation. If the vanquished have something to lose and nothing to gain, they will hesitate before starting hostilities over again. But if they have nothing to lose and everything to gain—as is the case with the Hungarians—they will never let a chance slip of upsetting the existing settlement, even by force of arms, when all other means have failed. Patriotism is refined and magnified by misery; it loses half its potency if the pocket is likely to be touched in its outward manifestation. This is clearly proved by the attitude of the three million German Bohemians who were tacked on to the Czech Empire in spite of their protests. They detest the Czechs and from the first this expatriation was denounced, even by Entente experts, who declared that a virile, intelligent race like the German Bohemians would never settle down under Czech rule. But what has happened? The German Bohemians to-day find themselves



citizens of a country with a currency which stands fourth in Europe, and in consequence they are comparatively rich and prosperous, owing to the action of their enemies in placing them under the rule of a race whom they cordially hate and regard as their inferiors. Whereas, had they had their own way, they would find themselves either Austrian citizens with a currency of 350,000 crowns to the pound, or Germans with a currency of 100,000 marks to the pound. Therefore, you will hear nothing more of "Self Determination" for German Bohemia—at least until the German mark has risen to something like the value of the Czech crown. The same argument can be applied to the case of the Hungarians. They will never be content or peacefully acquiesce in any settlement until their own nationals, some two and a half millions of whom have been placed under foreign rule, have been restored to the Motherland; but on the other hand, if this measure coincided with an equitable arrangement whereby they could obtain the necessary raw materials—coal, cotton, iron-ores, flax, etc.—to restore their industries and re-organize their agriculture, they would regard the loss of the former non-Hungarian territories with far more complacent eyes.

But what is the solution? Can a solution be found in fact? The ground has been gone over again and again by the best financial brains and no practical measure has yet been framed or put into execution. Briefly the problem is this. It divides itself into two heads. (1) Is it possible to raise the currency of a country like Hungary (I am purposely omitting Austria because her case appears incurable) to a point where it will enable her to purchase raw materials from a neighbour like Czecho-Slovakia; or conversely, is it possible to reduce the value of the Czech currency to a point where her poorer neighbours are enabled to trade with her? (2) Is there any means of controlling the raw materials of Central Europe and distributing them on an equitable basis amongst all the old



and new States of the former Empire, according to their several capacities for absorption in their industries and agriculture?

The first of these propositions can be set aside as almost insoluble, except by the natural process of time, because the restoration of the Hungarian currency seems to be entirely dependent on the second proposition, viz., the balancing of exports and imports, and this can only be brought about by her ability to purchase raw materials from her neighbours. To purchase abroad, Hungary must have a currency on a par with her foreign markets. But the tendency seems to be the other way. The Czech Government are contemplating placing their crown on a gold basis by reducing the note issue, withdrawing the present currency, and replacing it by a new issue in the proportion of one to five, it being their ambition to make their money of equivalent value to the Swiss franc. If this measure is adopted trade with her neighbours will become more impossible than ever.

Therefore the second solution would seem to be the only feasible one. Such a measure must be based on the system of a double currency for each State, one for external purchasing on a gold basis, and the other for internal use, i.e. that which exists at present. Some authorities have declared this system would never work in practice because there would be the general tendency to hoard export currency and get rid of the fluctuating internal currency as soon as possible. But there are certain safeguards by which this might be checked.

The whole scheme would entail the control of the raw materials of Central Europe for a number of years by an International Body, composed of all the countries interested, under the auspices of the League of Nations. Such a scheme is certain to meet with much preliminary opposition from the Czechs. It would entail a conference of financial representatives of all these States, and the arguments would doubtless be long and heated, but

in the end a solution must be found, because all parties must eventually be driven to some sort of compromise, through self-interest and self-preservation. In the first place, the Committee of the League of Nations should make a profound study of all the existing raw materials in Central Europe, of their value and geographical position. This should be followed by a second survey of where the raw materials went and where they were employed to the best advantage before the break-up of the Empire. In other words, to rediscover the natural channels through which trade flowed in the old Dual Empire before the war. This survey would show the anomalies of the existing distribution and where the real hunger spots exist.

For instance, Hungary needs oil from Galicia, coal and iron from Czecho-Slovakia, copper from Rumania and flax from other neighbours. The League of Nations would then take control of the output of raw materials, irrespective of territorial considerations, and endeavour to divert a proper proportion of each into those territories where they are most needed. As it is hardly likely that Czecho-Slovakia, Rumania, or Yugo-Slavia would part with any of their surplus supplies of raw materials without payment, although this course would undoubtedly pay them in the end by causing a general revival in trade in all neighbouring States, a means must be found by which the States with the debased currencies can purchase from their richer neighbours. As they cannot do this themselves, they must be financed for the time being by a note issue of the League of Nations itself. But the League could only issue notes against first-class security, if the currency is to retain its value, and this must next be found.

Now in every country, however poor, there are certain securities in real property or commodities which can never really lose their intrinsic value, because they are necessities of life, such as agricultural land, forests, mines—and to a limited extent, railways and buildings. Thus when Hungary required so many million tons of black coal, she

would apply to the Financial Committee of the League. The Committee would examine her claim to ascertain her capacity for profitable absorption of the amount demanded and would at once look to the nearest and cheapest market for purchasing the supply. The League would then take from the Hungarian Government an equivalent security in land or forests or railroads, or in the case of a private industry she could take a lien in advance on the manufactured articles for the making of which coal was required. The Committee would then purchase the requisite amount of coal in League of Nations Bonds fully secured—if not immediately realizable—on real estate and commodities. Or vice-vêrsa, supposing Czecho-Slovakia wished to purchase a portion of Hungary's surplus crops, the League would then issue bonds based on similar security to the necessary amount and offset them against Hungary's purchase in iron or coal. The League would, in fact, act as a general clearing-house between the former States of the Dual Empire and continue to act until the currencies gradually recovered to a par basis. The re-distribution of raw material and the re-starting of industries would immediately bring about a rise in the value of the existing internal currencies in all these States, because the fall has been almost entirely brought about through the necessity of each government being obliged to purchase materials and manufactured articles in foreign valuta, a process which constantly entails fresh issues of notes and with every fresh issue there is a corresponding slump on the foreign exchanges. As a co-relative measure, the note issue of each State should be controlled and the old currency gradually replaced by a new issue.

Were measures adopted on these lines—even if at first they failed to work miracles—they would go a very long way towards alleviating the financial situation in Central Europe, and restoring confidence and good-will between peoples. One all-important fact must be borne in mind



in considering the disintegration of the old Empire and the existing economic chaos. There has been no vast shifting of population from one centre to another, except the marked exodus seen in all countries from the country to the towns. Millions of men and women have changed their flags, who have not changed their homes. Therefore no State has been left with a population twice its former size, with a territory reduced by half. The population remains approximately what it was before the war with the same density of dwellers in each district. The same amount of agricultural land is available, the centres of industries remain where they were and raw materials cannot move. But artificial boundaries have been created and artificial tariffs have been raised. The manufactory has been cut off from its supplies of raw material; the manufacturer from his market; the agricultural producer from those he previously fed; manufactures are idle from lack of cotton and flax and wool in one State; in another the flax rots in the fields and the sheep are hardly worth the shearing; coal and iron are abundant in one district and twenty miles away they cannot be bought for love or money. Each State has, in fact, become a water-tight compartment of racial hate and economic ruin and chaos, even with its natural markets within a hundred yards of its frontiers. Each is struggling for air and for access to those markets and those supplies of raw material which formerly supplied life blood to the whole Empire. No nobler work could be accomplished by the League of Nations than by tearing down these artificial barriers, restoring good-will between nations who were formerly friends and allies and finding a place in the sun for both friend and foe alike. Surely there must be a solution. The fifty odd millions who acknowledged the sway of Franz Joseph lived in comparative peace and prosperity. They still dwell amidst the same surroundings and occupy the same homes to-day with exactly the same material sources at their command, but yet, owing to the old hates



and young tariffs, the majority are faced with starvation and ruin and are in consequence ready to commit their future to the arbitration of arms once again, a process which may better and cannot make worse their miserable lot.

It is a common error to suppose that the fall in the currencies has been brought about by the huge debts contracted during the War. But this is hardly borne out by the facts. The shares of all active industries, which have been able to keep going, have risen in the same proportion as the currency has fallen. Live industries do not really suffer by these stupendous falls in the currencies, for as the former fall, the shares rise almost exactly "pro rata," because every speculator or investor hastens to get out of a falling currency into dividend-paying shares. Naturally there are many industries which have closed down altogether through lack of raw material or artificial separation from their markets, and may never be revived. They are therefore a dead loss to the community. But this is rather the exception than the rule. The only stocks which permanently decline with a falling currency are Government War Loans—that is to say the National Debts, for they are a non-product security redeemable in the currency of the day. They produce no necessity of life which automatically rises and falls with the currency, thereby constantly maintaining its market value. Therefore almost all enemy countries to-day could pay off their national war debts for a mere song, if they could but obtain a loan in sterling. In this respect they are in a far happier position than the Entente States which have won the War, whose national debts have in no wise diminished. But this is one of the anomalies with which mankind is faced as a result of a rush to arms to settle its disputes.

Therefore there is the reverse side of the picture to be considered, for if the currencies of the States of Central Europe improve, so also their indebtedness will increase, as both capital and interest are payable in the current

valuta as they become due. Therefore, unless these small States get rid of their war debts while their currencies are still debased, they will find themselves saddled with an ever-increasing burden as their currency gradually recovers. For instance, supposing Austria (present Austria) and Czecho-Slovakia each had the same amount of the old debt of the Dual Empire to meet, Czecho-Slovakia, in order to get rid of her share of it, would have to pay about 2,500 times as much as Austria, because that represents the difference in the values of their currencies to-day. Czecho-Slovakia would have to pay seventy times as much as Hungary, and Hungary about thirty times as much as Austria. This is one of the strangest of all the anomalies produced by post-war conditions. The poorer a country becomes, so in equal ratio do her national liabilities become lighter. Thus in order to save the finances of these struggling States, a means must be found to enable them to get rid of their debts before their currencies rise to a figure which, while enabling them to trade on more equal terms with their neighbours, would simply leave them with an internal debt corresponding with the increase in the value of their valuta. But this difficulty might be overcome in the following manner. The League of Nations could take over some of the realizable assets of these States and issue bonds to the amount necessary to pay off the war debts at the value of the crown as it stood on a certain date to be arranged by mutual consent. The national debt of each country would thus be placed on a gold basis. The sum involved in regard to Austria and Hungary would be trifling, amounting to only a few millions sterling. The only losers would be the investors in this war loan, who stand to lose anyway, and this very fact would act as a wholesome deterrent against militarism in the future.

Thus these States would be saved from the danger of having to meet their national liabilities in an ever-rising crown, which would cripple them for years and prevent

any real rise in their currencies. Security for the re-payment of this advance could be taken on the customs for a term of years. By this means the sums advanced by the League of Nations would be speedily paid off, for the customs receipts would increase pro rata with the rise in the currency. Thus the primal securities, taken as the main security, would speedily be available for other purposes. The effect of the removal of this incubus of debt and freedom from the menace of its constant increase with a rise in the currency, would be instantaneous. Combined with the facilities for foreign trade, there would be a rapid even-ing up of all the currencies of these small republics. Some will argue that this is helping a fallen enemy too far and will enable him to recover too quickly. But is there any alternative? Already, we have been obliged to raise a loan to save Austria and we shall have to go on doing this indefinitely unless we can place Austria and Hungary on their legs again and make them self-supporting. Every country will in fact share in the general recovery of European trade.

## CHAPTER XIX

### A FINAL LOOK ROUND

THE future of all the nations east of the Rhine is in the melting pot and the final form in which they will emerge may not be seen for many years to come. The war set the pot boiling and peace has not yet cooled the seething metal to its final shape. What fresh ethnographical, economic and political groupings will arise only time can show, and he would be a bold man who would attempt to prophesy at this stage. One fact is clear. We are just as far off a permanent settlement to-day as we were in 1919. The Turk has returned to Europe after a temporary absence of three years, in spite of the fact that one of the most popular battle cries of the Entente in the latter stages of the war was the final expulsion of the blood-thirsty slayer of Christian peoples from Europe. After this dramatic return, forced on the Entente at the point of the bayonet, who knows what may not happen in the future? The fatal mistake of some of the Allies, and more especially of England, was to yield to popular clamour and to disarm before the steel framework of the New World had even been completed and before there had been any attempt to disarm the most warlike of our enemies. The Turk has come back because he was prepared to go on fighting and we were not. It is too late now to enter into the merits of our original quarrel with the Turks. The blame really lies in our Foreign policy before the War and with the long line of feeble boudoir diplomats who represented England in Constantinople and let the golden opportunity of making friends with the young Turks slip



through their fingers whilst the Germans worked. Perhaps Providence has ordained the return of the Turk to aid us in the future. Surely in the position we have always claimed for ourselves as protectors of the Mohammedan world, they should have been found fighting by our side. As it is, the net result in the end has been the same, because had they fought as our Allies, they would have remained in possession of Constantinople, Eastern Thrace, probably Western Thrace, part of Bulgaria, and who knows what other territory to-day. As it is we have gone back to the position as it existed at the close of the Balkan Wars in 1913.

Good may come out of the evil in the long run. We have placed a powerful fighting race in possession of the one conquest Russia has ever longed for, and now the Russian dream of obtaining Constantinople as the price of her sacrifices in the War, is as far off as ever and we may have to revert to the time-honoured old Beaconsfield policy again. The collapse of Czardom, the rise of the Soviet Government, and the general threat to the very structure of European society have at least relieved us of the painful necessity of fulfilling our promises towards Russia, made in the extreme agony of war.

Of all the settlements with our enemies which have been made since the War, that with the arch-conspirator, Germany, would appear to be based on the firmest foundation, and there seems less likelihood of the Treaty of Versailles being revised—except in its financial clauses—than any of the other peaces, which can hardly even be called truces. The Sèvres vase of beautiful structure is already smashed into a thousand pieces, before it could even be presented to those for whose regeneration it was intended. The Treaty of the Trianon is in many respects a dead letter, and cannot in common justice to millions be allowed to continue in its present form.

Although hardly recognised as yet, on account of the constant pressure necessary to enforce the Treaty of Ver-

sailles, culminating in the occupation of the Ruhr, the one permanent result of the War will surely be to turn German eyes and German ambitions from the west to the east of Europe. The long struggle of centuries for supremacy on the Rhine has probably come to an end for ever, unless indeed German expansion in the east forces the French to take the offensive in the west. But the French will surely hesitate long, before going to war on such a pretext. France has her colonies to develop and expand and the most useful field for her energies will be found there. The military restrictions imposed on Germany, notably the neutral zone along the Rhine, render the chances of a successful campaign against France, even without Allies to assist her, extremely remote. The strategical railways and bridgeheads on the Rhine, so essential for rapid concentration, no longer exist, and the French cannot now be surprised and almost overwhelmed by a sudden concentration of the mass of the German Army, as in 1870 and 1914.

It would appear that Germany's future prospects in the east, in spite of present restrictions, have been rendered brighter by the War and by the subsequent European settlement than they were in 1914, while her chances of obtaining the Brie ore and coal-fields and of securing the richest industrial provinces of France have gone for ever. The German, if he is capable of learning any lesson from the past, will surely not waste his time in breaking his neck against a stone-wall in the west with the public opinion of the whole world against him, when he holds most of the trump cards for dominating Europe from the Rhine to the Black Sea.

The most striking feature of the settlements since the War has been the departure from the long respected principle of almost all European statesmen of the first rank that small States create a constant menace to the peace of Europe. The dangers attendant on the break-up of the old Dual Monarchy on the death of the Emperor

Franz Joseph were foreseen long before the War, and there was a general consensus of opinion that the Balkanizing of the Empire must be avoided at all costs. But the Conference of Paris has Balkanized Central Europe into such a number of hostile States that the problems that will have to be faced in the future are infinitely greater and more difficult of settlement than those which arose when the old Macedonian Question was constantly cropping up and turning the hair of European statesmen grey with anxiety. The Balkanizing may have been unavoidable in 1919, but it shows on what a precarious basis the new Europe has been built up.

Let us glance for a moment at the list of states, republics and monarchies which lie east and south-east of the solid phalanx of Germanic tribes, temporarily crippled it is true, but eagerly searching for fresh fields for commercial enterprise and perhaps of military conquest. Starting from the north we find Finland, Esthonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Czecho-Slovakia, Ruthenia, Austria, Hungary, Yugo-Slavia, Albania, Rumania, Bulgaria, Greece, and Turkey-in-Europe. Here are fifteen races with fifteen different governments, tariffs, policies and ambitions. Not one of these states is individually powerful enough to resist a combination of its neighbours, and each must therefore in the future make definite alliances, which means the formation of groups hostile to one another. These facts show clearly on what a precarious thread the future peace of Europe rests.

In the natural order of events one may expect to find the future alliances conforming to those which existed during the War, and the policy of the Entente since the Armistice has unfortunately done nothing to detach our late enemies in the Balkans from the Central Powers. Thus, Austria, Hungary, Bulgaria and Turkey through a common misfortune will naturally be attracted towards one another, while Czecho-Slovakia, Yugo-Slavia and Rumania are likely to form another group (these three Powers are



already united under the title of the "Little Entente"). The future policy of Greece is difficult to define, but there would appear to be a definite trend towards the Entente at the present time. Poland, with few direct interests in the Balkans, is likely to form a northern alliance with Esthonia, Latvia, Lithuania, against the common enemy—Russia.

All these small States lie between the two great homogeneous racial groupings—the Germanic and the Slav. These are the two magnets which will eventually force the smaller fry to range themselves under the aegis of the one or the other. Thus there cannot be a permanent settlement within the new and old Balkans until the future status of Russia as a nation has been definitely and finally settled. There is no atmosphere of stability or permanency about anything which happens in Central Europe at the present time, because each little state is anxiously waiting to see in what form the Russian Government and Russian people will emerge from the troubled ocean of Bolshevism, which now submerges them. Bolshevism, as it exists in Russia to-day, is undoubtedly hateful to the majority of the inhabitants of the fifteen States I have named. Not one of them will seek an alliance with, or the suzerainty of, Russia under her present Government. Each is waiting and watching for the gradual evolution of Russia from a Bolshevik to a constitutional community.

The outstanding event of 1922 has been the return of the Turk to Europe without waiting for the permission of the Entente. The echoes of the Turkish triumph have reverberated throughout the east and have opened up a new vista to both our former friends and former enemies in the Balkans. Both regard the future with a different orientation from that of a year ago. The Balkan States have discovered that although we still have a firm grip on Germany, neither France nor England are prepared to intervene in Central Europe, beyond the utterance of warnings and pious expressions of opinion. Both friend



and foe now realize they are dependent on themselves and must seek their own salvation in contracting friendships or alliances with their neighbours. They know for certain that, at least in our time, not a French or British bayonet will be seen east of the Rühr. Thus the air is cleared, but the perplexity is great.

As I have repeatedly pointed out in this book, there was bitter hostility towards Germany, in Austria, Hungary and Bulgaria at the termination of the War, for these states regarded their former ally as the author of all their misfortunes. Both Austria and Hungary were prepared to throw in their lot with us and to accept our advice in all things in return for some measure of sympathetic treatment in their manifold misfortunes. But the Entente failed to grasp the golden opportunity and must now pay the cost. Once again the eyes of these ruined and unhappy peoples are turning towards their former ally, Germany, as the only country on which they can place any reliance in the future. They cannot be blamed for their change of attitude. They are attracted within the German orbit, not only by sentimental, but also by material and strategical ties. The great waterway of Europe—the Danube—and all the great railroad lines, strategical and commercial, coming from Germany, pass through Austria and Hungary, and on through the Balkans to the Black Sea, Constantinople, and Asia Minor. Vienna is the hub of the universe in Central Europe and the great prize for which all will contend in the future. As we are no longer in a position to stop the “*anschluss*” (union of Germany and Austria) by force of arms, we are almost certain to see its accomplishment within the next few years. The granting of a loan to Austria cannot stop, even though it delays, the inevitable *dénouement*. At the present time there are obstacles to the expansion of German influence in Central Europe, owing to her weakness as a result of the War and the fact that her currency has sunk to such a point that she is incapable of financing any of the Balkan

States. But the Germans, driven to desperation ever since the annexation of the Ruhr will be quick to see that they can only regain what they have lost by obtaining fresh markets and making fresh alliances in Central Europe and the Balkans, and if the German Government is officially powerless the German pioneer is already preparing the way.

The weakness of the strategical position of both Poland and Czecho-Slovakia will offer an irresistible temptation to both Germany and Russia in the future. Russia is determined to regain Warsaw, and Germany what she has lost in Upper Silesia. It is difficult to visualize any permanent future for the Polish Republic, unless she is prepared to accept the suzerainty of either Germany or Russia. But an alliance with one would mean a quarrel with the other. Thus it is almost inevitable that Poland will be partitioned once again. The Poles have shown little or no aptitude for self-government and there is now no Power prepared to come to their aid as the French did in 1921. Sympathy and advice will block the wires from Paris, London, and New York, but not a man or a gun will be sent to aid her in the field. Modern democracy has decreed this.

The gravest danger to the future peace of Europe was the creation of the Czecho-Slovak Republic in its present form. In it are reproduced all the worst features of the old Dual Monarchy, with few of the corresponding advantages which the old Empire undoubtedly possessed. Czecho-Slovakia is in fact a wealthy little island surrounded by a sea of jealous and covetous enemies and torn by internal dissensions within. Its seven different races are for the moment held together by a common currency which outweighs the racial hatred and the desire for "Self-Determination," but their hates are still smouldering beneath the surface, ever ready to burst into flame.

Neither has the Czech Government done anything to pacify the enemies within its borders or its hostile neighbours without. Its policy hovers on the brink of com-

munism. Private property is no longer safe, corruption is rampant, and it is the fixed policy of the Czech Government to expropriate the property of all the citizens living within the borders of the state who are not pure Czechs by birth. It does not matter whether they become Czech citizens and take the oath or not. Czecho-Slovakia is at present basking in the sunshine of an artificial prosperity, on account of the fact that only Benes and Masaryk obtained a hearing in Paris, and she was able to enrich herself at the expense of all her neighbours. But what of the future? The Czech Republic was brought into the world and bred to premature maturity by American gold and under the protection of French bayonets. But for these powerful influences, the Republic, as at present constituted, would not have thrived for six months. But the streams of gold are running dry, the French bayonets are no longer available, and the Republic must now stand by herself. Her position is certainly not enviable. Within her borders are nearly three million German Bohemians who, realizing the advantages of a high currency, are nevertheless equally determined to throw off the Czech yoke as soon as possible. West of the German Bohemians are seventy millions of hostile Germans. To her south lies a luke-warm Austria, to her north and north-east a none too friendly Poland, and to the south-east, adjutting on Slovakia—a race who have no real friendship for their Czech masters—is the Hungarian nation, reduced in size and enfeebled by her losses, but nevertheless animated by an unchanging hatred of the race which has so enriched herself at her expense. Yet in spite of their precarious position, the Czechs continue to pursue a hostile policy towards their neighbours, instead of taking the only steps which can preserve peace, namely, to hand back the Hungarian “nationals,” who are compelled to live under the Czech flag, and to enter into an economic agreement with the Hungarians and Austrians, which would enable these peoples to enjoy a measure of economic prosperity



and which would at the same time do away with many of the present bones of contention. The League of Nations has a fertile field for its work in the New Balkans. Would it but devote itself to bringing about an economic Customs Union amongst the Danubian States, the peace of Europe might yet be insured for many years to come.

But to return to Germany and the possibilities of her future expansion in the east. Her policy can hardly be actively aggressive as long as the reparations question remains unsettled and until the dark clouds which at present hang over Russia have lifted.

The immediate field for the enterprise of the German pioneer would seem to be in Russia itself, where he would simply be returning to take up the old rôle he played in supplying the place of a middle class in that country before the war. Already there has been a marked exodus of German military, technical, and industrial experts to Soviet Russia to help Lenin and Trotsky produce some order out of the existing chaos. The influence of German ideals, opinions and enterprise is already making itself felt throughout the land and every day it increases will bring the end of the Bolshevik régime nearer, probably by gradual evolution, not revolution. The conflicting ideals of the Teutonic and Slav mentality can never be reconciled and as the German pioneer regains his grip on the country, the capitalist, the bourgeois and the peasant will each return to his proper and accustomed sphere of activity.

With the Germans occupied in the reconstruction of Russia, it follows as a natural corollary that the Teutonic and Slav Races must sink their differences and live in friendship for a long time to come. It will be in the mutual interest of both to work together and to unite in their general policy towards the Entente. Already there have been vague rumours of secret alliances whereby Germany, unable to arm herself owing to the restrictions of the Treaty of Versailles, has agreed to train her former adversaries'



armies and to supply the brains and motive power to illimitable numbers of Slavs, who will then sweep through Europe and shout defiance to the French on the banks of the Rhine. In reality there is little danger of this awful nightmare coming to pass. There are too many sound reasons against it and material obstacles in the way. In the first place it will be difficult to induce the Slavs to fight in a cause in which they are so little interested, and from which they have little or nothing to gain. They will only be prepared to pick Germany's chestnuts out of the fire if they can go half shares with her. That half share can only be found ready to hand in Central Europe and the Balkans. There is nothing in the future, except lack of material, to prevent a Russian army directed by Germans from over-running Poland once again and repartitioning that country. This would suit the plans of both admirably. There is nothing in the future to stop a Russian army led by Germans from over-running Czecho-Slovakia and restoring the German Bohemians to Germany and Slovakia to Hungary and holding the Czechs in complete bondage. When these two weak buffer States have been disposed of, the entire Balkans, from Vienna to Constantinople, would be open to German penetration and German influence. Alliances with Austria and Hungary, Bulgaria and Turkey would follow as a matter of course and the members of the Little Entente would be cut in twain and separated from one another with Czecho-Slovakia isolated in the north, Rumania in the east, and Yugo-Slavia in the south. Thus the future of every state in the New Balkans is in the melting pot, situated as they are between the upper and the nether Teutonic and Slav grindstones.

The Entente is equally powerless to protect its friends or to check the expansion of its foes. The sacrifices and weariness produced by five years of war and the bitter disillusion of peace have determined the Entente Democracies not to interfere anywhere, except where their

interests are directly affected. The evacuation of Asia Minor by every nation handed a mandate three years ago; the return of the Turk to Constantinople and Thrace; the bankruptcy of Germany and failure to obtain reparations, the frequently manifested differences of opinion amongst the members of the Entente have entirely changed the political outlook in Central Europe and the Balkans. The commands of the mighty—so potent three years ago—are no longer regarded as orders, or their utterances as the inspired words of far-seeing prophets. In spite of our colossal efforts and sacrifices during the war, in spite of our splendid victories in the field, in spite of our efforts to right our finances, our prestige in Central Europe stands lower to-day than at any other time since we first took an active interest in Continental affairs. If we could not trust the Coalition Government at home, it can well be understood how little it was trusted abroad. The strange diplomatic antics, melodramatic utterances and rapid changes of opinion at first excited the interest and the wonder of millions who, suffering from a grievous defeat of which he was advertised to be the sole author, regarded everything Mr. Lloyd George said as the last word in human wisdom, and his every dramatic move as merely the idiosyncrasy of a mind so great that it stood almost above human criticism. The old John Bull with his heavy tread, slowness in decision, honesty and common-sense, disappeared from the European gallery. No country ever suffered a more grievous catastrophe than this. The harm which has been done is irremediable. Neither friend nor foe trust our foreign policy any longer.

Let us face the facts. British and French influence in Central Europe has declined almost to vanishing point. The Balkan States old and new only understand advice backed by bayonets. These are no longer forthcoming, so we are eliminated from this peculiar field of racial hatred and economic confusion. We have left the huge gateway of the Danube open to our most determined and implacable

enemy, and we have unloosed on the Balkans the whole weight of Teutonic enterprise and Teutonic ambition. German influence will spread throughout the fifteen suckling states, the feeble offspring of victory, and the final fight for supremacy over them will be between Germany and Russia.

It is difficult to believe that with such a prize almost within their grasp the new generation of Germans—once the authors of the late war have disappeared from the scene—will turn their eyes once again towards the Rhine and revert to the old time-honoured policy of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, carried to its culminating point by Bismarck and Moltke in 1870. I am a firm believer that the direct German menace to France has passed away for ever, with the opening up of this vast and profitable field for German enterprise and German arms in Central Europe and the Balkans.

German expansion in the east may take years to become formidable and a real menace to the fifteen states which have arisen from the ashes of this world cataclysm. But in the end it is just as inevitable as it is for the sun to rise. No one can foretell what fresh combinations will appear in the Balkans in the future. We may yet see old friends allied with former enemies and old enemies with former friends, but sooner or later each of these petty states will have to declare itself as the friend and ally of either Germany or Russia. These two giants are temporarily bound together by the ties of mutual interest which have arisen from a common misfortune. But they cannot last for ever.

The eternal struggle for European and Asiatic supremacy between the Teuton and the Slav is certain to break out again. The "casus belli" will be found, as usual, in the Balkans, and Germany in allying herself with Austria, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Turkey will at once incur the hostility of Russia by isolating the Southern Slavs from their northern brothers.

But as the prospects of eternal peace seem as far off as ever, it is hardly worth while thinking of the possibilities of the future. The best we can hope for is to preserve the peace of Europe as long as possible. This can only be done by restoring some measure of hope and prosperity to millions of men and women who now live on the verge of ruin and despair. The only agency capable of readjusting frontiers, restoring nationals to their own flags and breaking down the artificial barriers of tariffs, is the League of Nations. In the new and old Balkans that League will find a fruitful and glorious field for its work.



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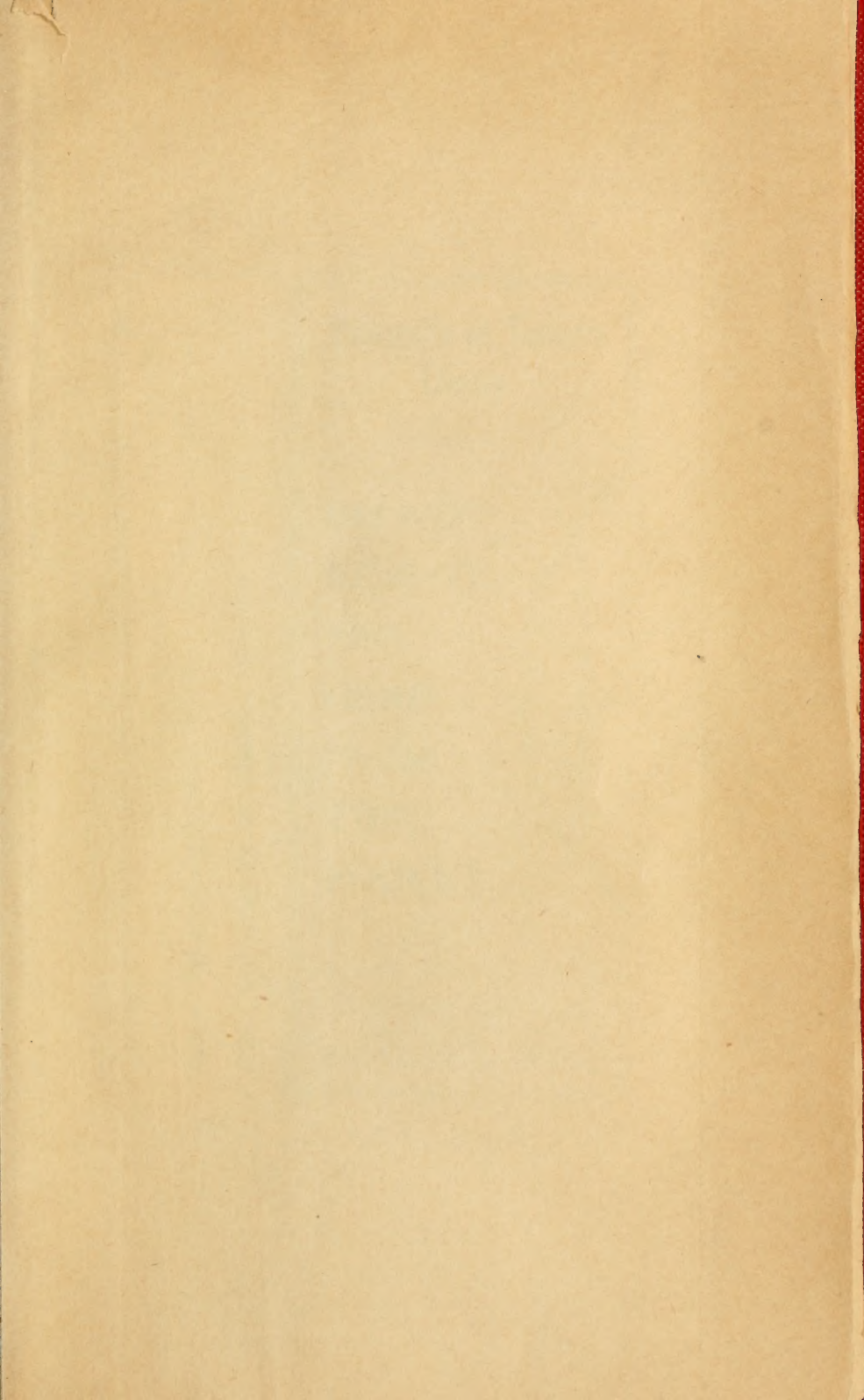
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